

**AN ANALYSIS OF THE CENSORSHIP OF POPULAR MUSIC WITHIN THE
CONTEXT OF CULTURAL STRUGGLE IN SOUTH AFRICA DURING THE
1980s**

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ABSTRACT

The censorship of popular music in South Africa during the 1980s severely affected South African musicians. The apartheid government was directly involved in centralized state censorship by means of the Directorate of Publications, while the South African Broadcasting Corporation exercised government censorship at the level of airplay. Others who assisted state censorship included religious and cultural interest groups. State censorship in turn put pressure on record companies, musicians and others to practice self-censorship. Many musicians who overtly sang about taboo topics or who used controversial language subsequently experienced censorship in different forms, including police harassment. Musicians were also subject to anti-apartheid forms of censorship, such as the United Nations endorsed cultural boycott. Not all instances of censorship were overtly political, but they were always framed by, and took place within, a repressive legal-political system.

This thesis found that despite the state's attempt to maintain its hegemony, musicians sought ways of overcoming censorship practices. It is argued that the ensuing struggle cannot be conceived of in simple binary terms. The works of Antonio Gramsci, Michel Foucault and Pierre Bourdieu, in particular, are applied to the South African context in exploring the localized nuances of the cultural struggle over music censorship. It is argued that fragmented resistance to censorship arose out of the very censorship structures that attempted to silence musicians.

Textual analysis brought to light that resistance took various forms including songs with provocative lyrics and titles, and more subtle means of bypassing censorship, including

the use of symbolism, camouflaged lyrics, satire and crossover performance. Musicians were faced with the challenge of bypassing censors yet nevertheless conveying their message to an audience. The most successful cases negotiated censorial practices while getting an apparent message across to a wide audience. Broader forms of resistance were also explored, including opposition through live performance, counter-hegemonic information on record covers, resistance from exile, alignment with political organizations and legal challenges to state censorship. In addition, some record companies developed strategies of resistance to censorship.

The many innovative practices outlined in this thesis demonstrate that even in the context of constraint, resistance is possible. Despite censorship, South African musicians were able to express themselves through approaching their music in an innovative way.

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List of abbreviations

AAA	Artists Against Apartheid
AAM	Anti-Apartheid Movement
ANC	African National Congress
AZAPO	Azanian People's Organisation
BMU	British Musicians Union
CASA	Culture in Another South Africa (Dutch anti-apartheid conference, 1987)
CBS	Columbia Broadcasting System (US-based record company)
CCP	Clive Calder Productions (SA-based record company)
CNA	Central News Agency (SA retail company)
COSAS	Congress of South African Students
COSAWR	Committee on South African War Resistance
COSG	Conscientious Objector Support Groups
Directorate	Directorate of Publications
ECC	End Conscription Campaign
EMI	Electrical and Musical Industries Ltd (UK-based record company).
FAWU	Food and Allied Workers Union
Freemuse	Free Musical Expression (international non-governmental organization)
IDASA	Institute for a Democratic Alternative for South Africa
JODAC	Johannesburg Democratic Action Committee
MFP	Music For Pleasure (SA distribution company)
NGK	Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (Dutch Reformed Church)
NP	National Party
PAB	Publications Appeal Board
PAC	Pan Africanist Congress
PCB	Publications Control Board
RAU	Randse Afrikaanse Universiteit (Rand Afrikaans University)
RMR	Rhodes Music Radio
SABC	South African Broadcasting Association
SACP	South African Communist Party
SADF	South African Defence Force
SAMA	South African Musicians Alliance
SAP	South African Police
SWAPO	South West African People's Organisation
UDF	United Democratic Front
UN	United Nations
VOA	Voice of America
WEA	Warner-Elektra-Atlantic (US-based record company)

Glossary

South African words, song titles or expressions used frequently in this thesis or which are not defined or translated in the text.

Amandla	Power
Azania	Black consciousness name for South Africa, reflects a desire for a black ruled country
Bakgat	There is no direct translation of 'bakgat', but it is a slang term meaning 'great!' A possible equivalent (to give a sense of the term) would be something like 'shithot'
Bantustan	Reserves set aside for black South Africans, depriving them of South African citizenship
Blerrie	Bladdy, bloody
Boer	Afrikaner (strictly speaking a farmer, but the word has developed a wider meaning)
Boeremeise	Afrikaans girl or young woman
Boeremusiek	'Traditional' Afrikaans music, usually a quickstep punctuated by a concertina sound.
Braai	Shortened version of 'braaivleis', South African barbecue
Braaied	Barbecued
Braaivleis	South African barbecue
Bubblegum music	Township pop typical of the 1980s, involving synthesizers and drum-box induced disco beats
Coon carnival	Western Cape coloured minstrel carnival
Darkie	Derogatory or affectionate slang for black person (depending on who is using the term)
Dingaan	A 19 th Century Zulu king
Dorp	Small town
Gereformeerde	Reformed
Hou My Vas	
Korporaal	Hold Me Tight Corporal
Impi	Zulu warrior
Ja	Yes
Jo'burg	Johannesburg
Jol	A party (noun), to party or have a good time (verb)
Jolling	Partying, clubbing or having a good time
Joller	Someone partying, clubbing or having a good time
Kaffir	Extremely derogatory word for black person
Kerkorrel	Church organ
Kerkraad	Church board
Koeksuster	Traditional Afrikaans sweet confectionary
Kombuis	Kitchen
Kwela	South African pennywhistle music
Larney	Wealthy (usually upper middle class) person
Lekkerliedjie	Nice/sweet (politically non-threatening) Afrikaans song

Mbaqanga	South African township music combining traditional and urban influences, usually with heavy bass, clipped guitars and choral vocals
Mbube	Zulu a cappella singing style. High lead vocals and bass-rich four part harmonies.
Naartjie	Tangerine
Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (NGK)	Dutch Reformed Church
Niemand	Nobody
Niemandslaan	Nobody's land
Okes	Blokes
Ossewa	Ox wagon, traditionally associated with early Afrikaners escaping British rule by trekking into the interior in the 19 th Century
Ou	Bloke or person
Ou's	(short for ouens) Blokes or people
Piekniek	Picnic
Shebeen	Township pub or club (unofficial and strictly speaking, illegal)
Sit Dit Af	Turn it off
Snor	Moustache
Sosatie	Kebab
Soweto	South West Township – South Africa's largest township, on the outskirts of Johannesburg
Staffrider	Anti-apartheid cultural publication
Stimela	Steam train associated with transporting migrant workers to and from the mines
Technikon	Technical College
Tjoepstil	Dead quiet (absolutely quiet)
Vastrap	Quickstep
Vellies	Short for veldskoene (field shoes) shoes associated with farmers and others who spend time walking in the veld (open fields)
Voëlvry	Afrikaans for 'free as a bird' while sounding like 'Feel free'
Voortrekkers	Early Afrikaners who escaped British rule by trekking into the interior of South Africa in the 19 th Century
Vrye Weekblad	Free (as in liberated) Weekly Newspaper aimed at alternative Afrikaners
Waterblommetjies	Water flowers
Whitie	Slang for white person. Can be derogatory or affectionate, depending on the person using the term
Wie is Bernoldus	
Niemand.	Who is Bernoldus Nobody?
Woza	Come (come to me)

Definitions for bubblegum music, kwela, mbaqanga and mbube have (to varying extents) been taken from *World Music: The Rough Guide*, edited by Simon Broughton and others (1994: 372).

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Thanks too, to Peter Gabriel, for it all started with your song.

You can blow out a candle
But you can't blow out a fire
Once the flame begins to catch
The wind will blow it higher

("Biko" (1980) – Peter Gabriel)

Notes on referencĳng

Albums titles are typed in *italics*, song titles are printed in “double inverted commas” and book titles appear in ‘single inverted commas’. All direct quotes taken from my interviews are indented without quotation marks, regardless of the length of the quote. All quotes from written sources appear in double quotation marks and are only indented if lengthy. All my own interviews are referenced simply by ‘Interview’ and year of the interview in parenthesis. The same applies to personal correspondence with people quoted or referred to. Full details of the interviews are located in a list of interviewees provided in Appendix 1, while brief biographies of musicians and interviewees quoted in this thesis are provided in Appendix 2. It is hoped that the latter appendix will be of assistance as an ongoing reference during the reading of the thesis.

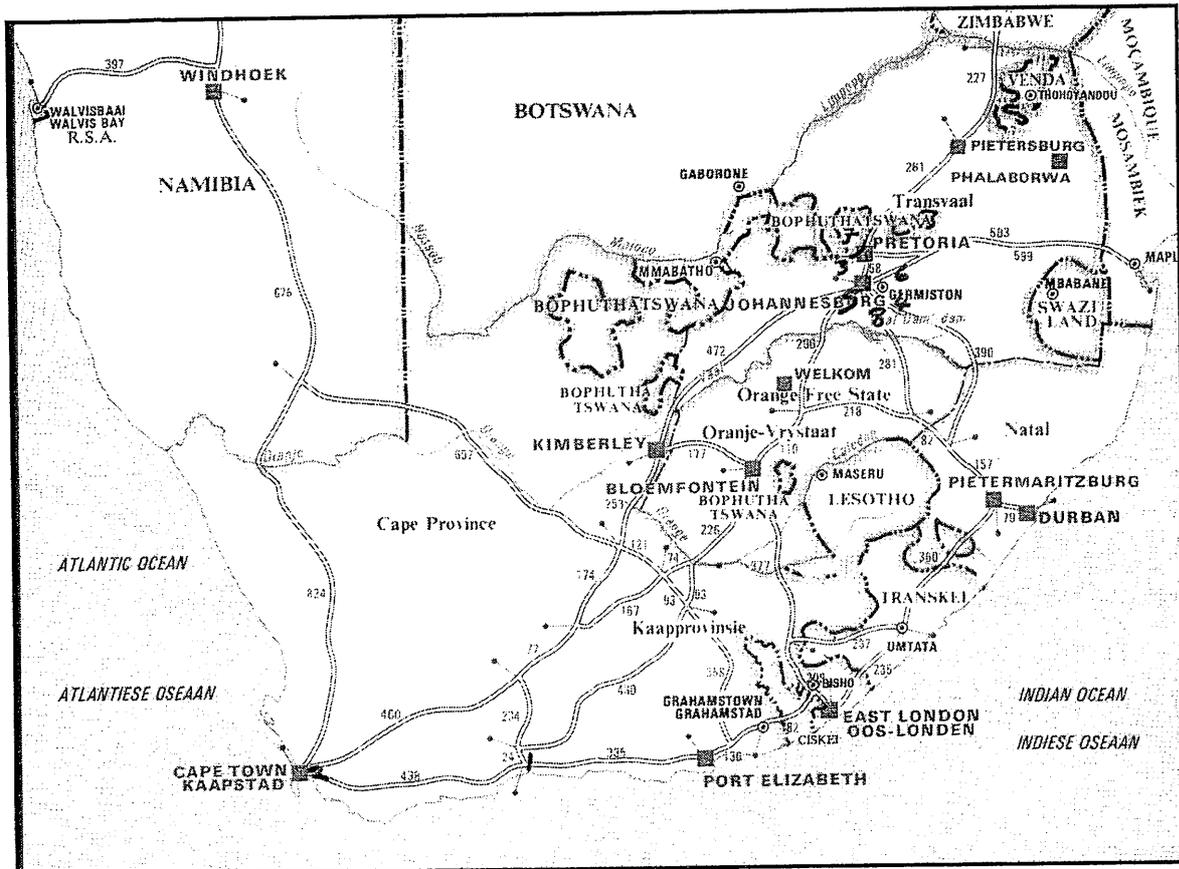


Image 1.1 South African Map (1980s).

Additional locations (not printed on map)

1. George
2. Langa
3. Lichtenburg
4. Nigel (Daduza township)
5. Soweto
6. Springs
7. Sun City
8. Vereeniging

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction: Exploring the censorship of popular music in 1980s South Africa

I heard people shouting far away for peace
Singing revolutionary songs

(“Mayibuye” (1991) – Vusi Mahlasela)

1.1 Prologue

This thesis begins with a story. It is a personal tale, comprising interwoven strands of consciousness. I was a scholar in a well-to-do government high school in the northern suburbs of white Johannesburg in the early 1980s. A friend and I were closely bonded in our obsession with popular music. One of our many schemes for increasing the size of our music collections was to order music from Cob Records in Porthmadog, Wales. We took a catalogue to school and hassled our friends and teachers into ordering imports at lower prices than in the local shops. We placed our orders without regard for import regulations, waiting with anticipation for the albums to arrive in the post.

During this time I became aware that the South African government’s Directorate of Publications and the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) would, from time to time, ban songs or entire albums. Although I did not agree with the reasons, they seemed to make conservative, paternalist sense. The government had banned Chris De Burgh’s “Spanish Train” (1976) in the late 1970s because it was deemed blasphemous and Pink Floyd’s “Another Brick in the Wall” (1979) was banned in 1980 because children boycotting school in the Western Cape were singing it. The incidents of censorship were reported in the liberal Rand Daily Mail and they made our ownership of the records in question subversively exciting. But a turning point came when a university friend asked us to order Peter Gabriel’s 3rd album (1980) for him, because it was banned in South Africa and he could not get it in the local shops. I ordered two copies, so as to add one to my collection. I was keen to get a copy for myself as it included “Games Without Frontiers” (1980), a song with which I was familiar because it had been played on Capital Radio earlier that year.

The album was banned because of the song “Biko”. My friend and I knew nothing about Steve Biko, so when the album arrived with our consignment we hurriedly listened to it, wanting to know what the fuss was about. While our precise reactions are difficult to

recall, we were outraged at the banning of what seemed to be a perfectly reasonable song. When given the task of presenting speeches in our English class we decided to jointly present a speech questioning the South African government's approach to the censorship of music. To do so we needed to find out more about Steve Biko. On the advice of our History teacher we searched microfiche records at the Rand Daily Mail archives. What we discovered was for me, a challenging revelation: the emotive coverage of the death, by torture, of an innocent man because of his political convictions. Biko had never been found guilty of a crime in a court of law. It suddenly became clear what censorship was about: a government trying to hide things from the public, not for the supposed public good, but for its own self-serving reasons. While my academic interest in the censorship of music only surfaced years later (in 1998) the motivation for this thesis is somehow rooted in that song by Peter Gabriel, and the path of discovery it brought about.

1.2 The central aim of this thesis: contest over the censorship of popular music

My experience of "Biko" by Peter Gabriel captures the essence of this thesis, concerned as it is with some people's attempts to stifle undesired messages and images within the terrain of South African popular music in the 1980s. However, this thesis is not solely about repression. It also crucially focuses on attempts to resist censorship.

In focusing on contestation though, it must be noted that the focus is solely on contests over censorship. While the content of many examples of South African music censorship is political, this thesis is *not* about the impact of music on political transformation. It may well be that resistance to censorship can lead to broader political change, but even if so, this thesis does not explore that particular tangent. Rather, the task is to document, contextualize and analyse all known forms of censorship and as many instances of resistance to that censorship as have been discovered during the period of research. Many areas of popular music studies are touched on in a project such as this, too many to consider in depth. Where possible these have been included, as part of brief contextual discussion, but for further detail the sources referred to should be consulted.

The analysis provided in this study is based on archival evidence and interviews with musicians and others involved in the process of the censorship of popular music. It is hoped that the drawing together of the stories recorded here and the collation of crucial

archival documentation to support these stories, will piece together a process which can be preserved as an important insight into South Africa's musical past. It is also hoped that the severe effects of censorship recorded here will act as a warning against resorting to similar tactics in the future.

1.3 A selective overview of previous work on the censorship of popular music

Although censorship is one of the more contentious issues relating to popular music, with serious repercussions for freedom of speech and creativity, it has not received a great deal of specific and detailed focus within the ambit of academic writing. It often receives a mention in books to do with the politics of popular music or in companions and introductions to popular music, but there have been relatively few books on censorship of popular music specifically. Martin Cloonan (1996) conducted one of the most detailed localized studies into the dynamics of popular music censorship in his study of the censorship of popular music in Britain. Through the presentation of numerous cases, Cloonan provides an account of many forms of censorship of popular music in Britain over a period of twenty-five years. These include government, record industry, broadcasting, community and pressure group censorship. Cloonan's study offers important insights into the operation of censorship in a developed country. However, he fails to provide a theoretical context within which to situate the censorial practices he outlines. Furthermore, the study does not include a detailed account of strategies of resistance. While it must be acknowledged that little censorship of music takes place at the level of central government in Britain, censorship of music occurs throughout society, resistance to which is not explored although sometimes mentioned.

Cloonan is co-editor (with Reebee Garofalo) of a more recent book on the censorship of popular music around the world entitled 'Policing Pop' (2003). The book includes a variety of chapters dealing with censorship histories, case studies and issues. The book in general is an excellent showcase for these various areas and is a useful resource book, but as is usually the case with edited volumes, it lacks a systematic structure and argument. The book does make progress in a number of areas, especially in defining censorship and emphasizing the need to consider contexts when trying to understand censorship practices. Cloonan (2003: 13-29) provides a state-of-the-academy chapter on defining

copyright (see below) while Keith Kahn-Harris (2003: 81-99) puts forward an enlightened argument on the need to socially contextualize audience appreciation and music censorship in terms of scenes and subcultural capital. Case studies on China and Brazil by Jeroen de Kloet (2003: 166-185) and José Roberto Zan (2003: 205-220) respectively provide interesting parallels with South Africa, on which there is a chapter written by myself (Drewett, 2003: 153-165), a summarized preview of some of the central forms and censorship and strategies documented in this thesis. These chapters provide useful supporting documentation for some issues raised in this thesis.

A book of papers entitled 'Bleep! Censoring Rock and Rap Music' was published in 1999. The book focuses specifically on attempts within the United States to control rock and rap music. The contributors explore how government statutes, agency regulations, business controls and parents have attempted to censor music (Houchin Winfield and Davidson, 1999: vii). In one chapter of note, Betty Houchin Winfield (1999: 16) compares marketplace censorship to government censorship, showing that there are important parallels. In general the book focuses in detail on specific cases, often exploring relationships between central role players involved in battles over the censorship of rock and rap music in the United States. These include the Federal Communications Commission, National Endowment for the Arts, the Parents' Music Resource Centre, Morality in Media and Congress. Much of the focus is on the legal wrangles between these different groups with little application to contexts outside of the United States. Very few chapters in the book are theoretically informed, and there is only cursory discussion of resistance, to do with legal cases opposing attempts to censor.

Linda Martin and Kerry Segrave's (1993) 'Anti-rock: The Opposition to Rock and Roll' provides an interesting account of "the history of opposition to rock and roll from its beginnings up to the mid-1980s, written from a pro-rock point of view" (Martin and Segrave, 1993: vii). This history turns out to be mostly American (United States) although there are fleeting references to other countries, particularly the United Kingdom, but also Russia, Mexico and there are two one-line references to South Africa. The book usefully explores the arguments of those who have attempted to censor popular music. However, the focus of the book precludes issues of resistance and is fairly journalistic in style, not governed by a theoretical framework.

The same is true of Eric Nuzum's (2001) more recent 'Parental Advisory: Music, Censorship in America'. Nuzum's book covers many of the same incidents but does consider some of the responses to the instances of censorship covered. It is a useful reference on the controversies surrounding popular music in the United States, and serves as a reminder to the many ways in which censorship of popular music is exercised, not simply by government agents.

Four case study books published by Freemuse (Freedom of musical expression – The World Forum on Music and Censorship) written by John Baily (2001), Garth Cartwright (2001), Banning Eyre (2001) and Jean-Christopher Servant (2003) have usefully explored the mechanisms and context of censorship in Afghanistan, Romania, Zimbabwe and Nigeria, respectively. The books are written in the form of reports and conclude with recommendations to the problems outlined. Once again, their strength is in detailing mechanisms of censorship, but they do give some attention to resistance to censorship. There is no theoretical paradigm. Freemuse, through its website, occasional world conferences and regional workshops, has made an important contribution to documenting instances of censorship and strategies of resistance. The conference proceedings from the '1st World Conference on Music and Censorship' published by Freemuse (Korpe, 2001) considers numerous case studies of censorship in the form of papers and panel discussions, but again is devoid of theoretical depth. The 'Index on Censorship' special edition on the censorship of music brought out in 1998 is very similar in its content and absence of theory.

Roy Shuker (1998: 44-48) provides a brief but useful summary of key debates on popular music censorship within the United Kingdom and the United States (Australia and New Zealand receive a brief mention). He considers the various arenas (government, record companies, retail, live venues, pressure groups) in which censorship most often takes place. The controversy surrounding rap music is given particular attention.

Douglas Kellner (1995b: 174-197) also takes up the issue of rap music in the United States and is one of the few writers to place the censorship of music within a theoretical context. Referring to rap as "black radical discourse", Kellner outlines why rap is radical, and places the censorship of rap music within a context of hegemonic struggle. He argues that it is a musical form of resistance to white supremacy and oppression. For Kellner

(1995b: 191), "the way rap music circulates and is disseminated through oppositional communities, makes it an efficacious counterhegemonic form". Kellner's hegemonic framework and neo-Gramscian approach have usefully informed this thesis, although the discussion of music constitutes only a short section of his book and is restricted to rap music within the localized context of American inner city struggle.

John Street (1997: 173-181) considers the censorship of music as part of the politics of judgment. He is influenced by Pierre Bourdieu's writing on the sociology of judgment and taste, as outlined in 'Distinction' (1984). Accordingly, Street argues that censorship needs to be understood as political judgment, a product of political ideology, interests and institutions (Street, 1997: 181). Censorship forms part of a process of shaping or reshaping the political landscape, supporting certain interests while marginalizing others (Street, 1995: 179-80). In a later discussion Street (2001: 243-255) views instances of censorship as an inevitable consequence of music's political character. Street's (2001: 246 and 1997: 181) argument that it is the ability of music to shape society that leads to its censorship, as a reaction linked to the preservation of particular interests, is taken up in this thesis.

Keith Negus (1996: 196-208) considers the way in which the "malevolent state" attempts to control music. The malevolent state relies heavily on force and surveillance to control internal dissent and protest. Yet Negus (1996: 201) argues that even under such conditions, state attempts to erect cultural boundaries by making "people play and listen to particular types of music have always led to resistance and opposition". Like Kellner, Negus locates the censorship of music within the context of a hegemonic struggle, noting the ability of the dominated to resist censorship.

Most of the literature discussed above has to some extent informed the direction of this thesis. Discussions of the forms of censorship in other parts of the world have led to questions being asked about similar practices in South Africa during the 1980s. However, this thesis is not comparative, and does not overtly compare the South African situation to that of other countries. It does, however, seek to comprehensively document forms of censorship and resistance to that censorship within the realm of South African popular music in the 1980s.

Those of the above works (at least those sections that focus on censorship) underpinned by theoretical arguments, although useful, have lacked depth. This is to be expected, given that they all form short sections within books on broader topics. Some of these arguments and ideas are fleshed out in this thesis in an attempt to provide a more comprehensive theoretical framework within which to locate popular music censorship, and more specifically, South African popular music censorship.

1.4 Previous work on the censorship of popular music in South Africa

A comprehensive analysis of the censorship of South African popular music has never before been undertaken. A fairly large body of work exists on censorship in general during the apartheid era. Kobus Van Rooyen (1987) in his book 'Censorship in South Africa' provides a detailed technical account of the censorship process during his period as Director of the Publications Appeal Board. Christopher Merrett published a short article in 1982, and then a comprehensive book on South African censorship ('A culture of Censorship: Secrecy and Intellectual Repression in South Africa in 1994'). The censorship of popular music is not considered in either of these publications. Peter Horn (1979), J. M. Leighton (1983), Christopher Hope (1987) and Peter Stewart (1990) are amongst those who have also given the matter attention. Alex Hepple (1960), Gilbert Marcus (1984 and 1987), William Hachten and Anthony Giffard (1984) explore press censorship into the mid-1980s, as does Anton Harber in two 'Index on Censorship' articles in 1987 (he also published many articles in various newspapers during the mid-1980s). Miriam Tlali (1984), André P. Brink (1985), Nadine Gordimer (for example 1976, 1988, 1990) and J. M Coetzee (1996), amongst others, have provided extensive discussion of censorship in relation to literature. However, the issue of the censorship of popular music in particular has been given less attention. Muff Andersson (1981), Jeremy Marre and Hannah Charlton (1985), Van Rooyen (1987: 114), Street (1986: 19-23), Robin Denselow (1989: 186-202), Ingrid Byerly (1996) and David Coplan (2000) are among those who have briefly alluded to the topic, while Barry Gilder (1983), Phillip Page (1986), Ian Kerkhof (1986, 1989) and Ole Reitov (1998a: 1998b) have written more detailed but nevertheless cursory papers on popular music censorship. This thesis is the first attempt to explore popular music censorship and resistance to it in a detailed and

systematic manner, theoretically contextualizing the discussion so that it adequately deals with the role of all major role players involved in the censorship of popular music in South Africa.

1.5 Defining and analysing the censorship of popular music

An effective working definition of censorship as it applies to popular music has been provided by Martin Cloonan (2003:15) who defines it as “the process by which an agent (or agents) attempts to, and/or succeeds in, significantly altering, and /or curtailing, the freedom of expression of (popular musicians) with a view to limiting the likely audience for that expression”. This definition is an advance on an earlier definition (Cloonan, 1996: 23) in which Cloonan defined it as “the attempt to interfere, either pre- or post-publication, with the artistic expressions of popular musicians, with a view to stifling, or significantly altering, that expression” (Cloonan, 1996: 23). By changing “artistic expression” to “freedom of expression”, Cloonan has made it clear that censorship is not solely about judging whether or not something is art in the first place.

Pierre Bourdieu (1984) argues that judgements of taste are part of an endless struggle for classification engaged between classes. It is a struggle to convert economic capital into symbolic capital “which produces relations of dependence that have an economic basis but are disguised under a veil of moral relations” (Bourdieu, 1990: 290). For Bourdieu (1984: 6): “Taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier. Social subjects, classified by their classifications, distinguish themselves by the distinctions they make, between the beautiful and the ugly, the distinguished and the vulgar”. These distinctions involve a power struggle over the imposition of “a vision of divisions” whereby implicit social divisions are made visible and explicit (1990b: 138). A clear measure of the organization of taste in this way is seen in the “aesthetic dispositions” (Bourdieu, 1984: 28-30) preserved in institutions such as the repertoires of symphony orchestras, the ensemble of artists signed by specialist record companies and the play-lists of specialist radio stations or programmes. Aesthetic judgements are thus a product of social relations, “conditioned by material circumstances and class location, but the objects of taste – what is acceptable, what is unacceptable – are not determined by economic circumstances. This is the business of politics” (Street, 1997: 173-174). It follows that for

Bourdieu, struggles over artistic merit of cultural products are struggles over symbolic power relations. The strategies of those engaged in these struggles, “depend on the position they occupy in the structure of the field, that is, on the distribution of specific symbolic capital ... and, through the mediation of the dispositions constituting their habitus, ... on the degree to which it is in their interest to preserve or transform the structure of this distribution and thus to perpetuate or subvert the existing rules of the game” (Bourdieu, 1993a: 183). As political as these struggles over categorization may be, they do not normally constitute censorship, even though consumers regularly avoid certain music based on judgements of taste. The censor’s reason for censoring a piece of music has to do with meanings and messages rather than with taste. The fundamental difference between the categories ‘censorship’ and ‘taste’ is not one of mere semantics. One person’s censorship is not another person’s decision based on taste. When governments or other institutions ban music the decision is based on the content of the message (“freedom of expression”) rather than the aesthetics of the music alone.

Cloonan’s substitution of “freedom of expression” for “artistic expression” places less emphasis on taste and more strongly emphasizes the political nature of censorship. Indeed, this is the approach adopted by Marcus (1987: 8), who views censorship (in general) as: “[a] wide variety of practices (both legal and extra-legal) [which] combine to ensure that articulation of certain facts and opinions are curtailed and prohibited”. This underlines, first, the decision to silence or significantly alter the musician’s intended expression and, secondly, it focuses on information contained within the music. This clarification of the issue is not itself without problems, but it does eliminate decisions to exclude music based on mere musical taste. The problem that remains, however, has to do with that terrain in which artistic taste and moral/religious/political choice overlap or are integral. For example, cases involving religious fundamentalists who believe that the very medium of rock music is evil or that all rai music is blasphemous and should be prohibited. In these instances it is important to take cognisance of Arthur Schopenhauer’s (in Goehr, 1998: 23) argument that music, in a sense, has a language of its own. For some listeners the inherent ‘language’ of certain types of music might be erotic or secular and therefore deserving of censorship. This simply emphasizes the importance of context in such cases. It could further be argued that the decision to censor certain lyrics itself is a

matter of taste based on one's political, religious or moral beliefs. Here the word 'taste' is used incorrectly and this objection does not require further discussion.

A further aspect of censorship in need of consideration is self-censorship. Many musicians interviewed in this study revealed that they had, on occasion, practised self-censorship. The use of the term for these musicians clearly falls largely within the ambit of a traditional view of self-censorship, resulting from state pressure on less powerful individuals. In other words, this form of self-censorship can be understood in terms of the panoptic process of self-surveillance outlined by Michel Foucault (1975: 195-228). Government regulation through censorship boards is a form of surveillance applied to musicians and their record companies. The penalties for those discovered not to have complied with this external surveillance are potentially severe (especially involving the financial costs incurred for example, by music which does not sell because it has been banned for distribution or from airplay). The constraining influence of the panoptic gaze – as a “relation of discipline” (Foucault, 1975: 208) – leads the musician (and often the record company, too) to comply with the dictates of the external regulator during the process of recording or even the very act of writing itself. Thus the process of external surveillance ultimately subjects individual musicians, influencing them to engage in self-regulation. In some instances this extends to where they perform. For example, the politics of group areas, segregated venues and the acquisition of permits under apartheid and homophobic attacks on gay venues might prevent or at least pressure musicians from performing in certain venues or areas.

The musician's (integral) involvement in the performance of a song or, in the case of a songwriter, the process of writing the song, entails an investment of her/his person in that song. Musicians necessarily put something of themselves into the music they write/perform (even if they do not like the piece in question). Deciding what to write and perform is clearly a positional strategy. It contributes towards the meaning-production, understanding and interpretation arising from song writing and performance, which in turn impacts on the contest of discourse formation in society. The panoptical effect of self-surveillance when applied to censorship is thus to coerce the individual musician into self-censorship, a process which, if practised widely, is self-perpetuating, leaving the dominant discourse intact.

However, it could be argued that self-censorship is a normal part of everyday life and therefore should not be included in a study of the censorship of music as outlined thus far. Bourdieu (1993b: 90) argues that the social conditions of the production of discourse necessarily involve compromise. Any statement made involves “a combination of what there was to be said, which ‘needed’ to be said, and what *could* be said, given the structure of a particular field” (Bourdieu, 1993b: 90). A person entering a particular field is situated in a specific structure which pressures the individual into saying only what is appropriate or “sayable” (Bourdieu, 1993b: 91). These social contexts, which pressure individuals to censor what they utter before the utterance is made, form the basis for what Judith Butler (1997: 130) calls “implicit censorship”. Implicit censorship “refers to implicit operations of power that rule out in unspoken ways what will remain unspeakable. In such cases, no explicit regulation is needed in which to articulate this constraint” (Butler, 1997: 130). For Butler (1997: 128) this form of censorship is not understood simply in terms of juridical power. Because it precedes the text, it is in fact somehow responsible for its production. It has to do not only with what it is that an individual will be able to say but also constitutes the “domain of the sayable” (Butler, 1997: 133) within which the individual begins to speak in the first place. Accordingly, every text or utterance is formulated through a screening process of selection. If this is the case, why be concerned with instances of self-censorship practised by musicians, when such practices are a normal part of everyday life?

There is clearly a difference between self-censorship that follows from following a rule in an unconscious way, according to a tacit set of norms, and self-censorship according to explicit rules (laws) out of fear of political and/or economic reprisals. In other words, there is a difference between deciding to pre-edit what one utters because one chooses to and doing so against one’s wishes, because of explicit regulations and the fear of related repercussions. Despite this distinction, a niggling doubt persists. This is because in the former instance an individual nevertheless decides to make utterances within a context of constraining rules, tantamount to a form of self-censorship. One need only to consider Michel Foucault’s (1976: 17-18) discussion of the subjugation of sex at the level of language to grasp the severe level of censorship that takes place on a tacit level in many fields within Western society. Indeed, for Foucault (1976: 17), modern prudishness

involves “instances of muteness” which, by way of imposing silence, constitute censorship. This muteness derives from the social setting within which the individual is located, but also depends on the individual’s compliance with the prohibition. There is undoubtedly an element of “ambiguity of agency” (Butler, 1997: 129) in such circumstances, but this ambiguity is similar to that which operates when individuals are socialized into particular cultural norms. Although constraining, socialization does not sentence individuals to life in an “open prison”(Cohen and Taylor, 1992: 30). Stanley Cohen and Laurie Taylor (1992: 86) argue that the scripts of everyday life, far from determining our behaviour, allow individuals

“to elevate routines, regularities and mere behavioural sequences in such a way that we can assert our superiority over the everyday world. To say that there are only a finite number of scripts is no more ‘deterministic’ than to say that at any one time an artist has only a limited range of forms, materials and techniques to employ for self-expression”.

The implicit censorship of everyday conventional dialogue falls into a similar category, as opposed to self-censorship induced by threatening consequences from censors. For this reason, self-censorship here is regarded as any decision to alter an utterance because of perceived pressure from a formal censorial process, be it a state or private body.

Another issue to be considered is the part played by harassment in the censorship process. Cloonan and Garofalo (2003: 3) distinguish between “the narrower concept of censorship” and the broader concept of “policing”, which they believe conveys “the variety of ways in which popular music can be regulated, restricted, and repressed”. While Cloonan and Garofalo do not venture a clear definition of ‘policing’, the indications are that they would include police harassment under policing and not “the narrower concept of censorship”. Clearly harassment of musicians as an act in isolation is not, strictly speaking, censorship. Yet it is included in this thesis as an integral component of the censorship *process*. The fact that harassment did happen in South Africa, and was a threat to musicians, served as a part of the pressure to self-censor, and also, on occasion, led to the disruption of concerts, the damage of musical equipment and musicians’ vehicles and the physical assault or even detention of musicians. As such, the musician’s attempts to sing unhindered are interfered with for the distinct purpose of

curtailing, or significantly altering, that expression, as stated in Cloonan's definition of censorship. Christopher Merrett (1994: 2) definitely believes that it was necessary to define censorship in this broad manner within the apartheid South African context. He argues that censorship needs to cover:

“government interference with a wide range of political and social rights which govern the communication of ideas and information: to publish, to speak publicly, to organise collectively, to move freely around the country, and to gain access to official information”.

Certainly, as revealed in Chapter Four, the state's repressive apparatus collaborated with the state's official censors in applying the Publications Control Act of 1974, apart from being an ongoing real and perceived presence in all areas of recording, broadcast and retail in South Africa. For this reason, Daniel Kunene (1986: 41) argues that it is crucial for the repressive apparatus of authoritarian states to be included in a definition of censorship. He argues that censorship is “any curtailment or total denial of an individual's freedom to utter his or her ideas either orally or in writing, for any audience, whether actual or potential” (Kunene, 1986: 41). However, in authoritarian contexts censorship can “be further defined as a monopoly of propaganda enjoyed by a regime and upheld by force” (Kunene, 1986: 42). The use of force is an integral component of Kunene's definition of censorship, not a separate act that police also happen to engage in. In repressive regimes the world over, artists have refrained from certain artistic expression not simply because of censorship laws or the presence of censors, but because of the repressive repercussions of failure to submit to government dictates. It is certainly true of authoritarian states that policing gives censorship its teeth, enabling censorship to be far more daunting than it would otherwise be.

Furthermore, repressive laws need not be directed solely at artists for them to constitute censorship. Importantly, in agreement with Kunene, Brink (in Marcus, 1984: 17) located censorship within a wider context of repression. He argued that:

“censorship represents all the repressive powers of society. If there is one fundamental aspect of censorship that has to be grasped ... it is the fact that it never operates in isolation... censorship is an integral part of a much larger and more complicated phenomenon”.

Brink's assertion is based on the realization that "the distinction between artist as artist and artist as person is untenable" (Kunene, 1986: 43). A wide range of repressive legislation in South Africa impeded performing artists' freedom of expression, not only legislation aimed specifically at restricting publications. Apartheid laws fundamentally restricted (especially black) musicians through preventing them from freely participating in core aspects of musical creation and performance. In particular, apartheid interfered with three basic freedoms central to the work of any musician: freedom of association, freedom of expression and freedom of movement. Freedom of expression has been adequately dealt with in the preceding discussion, but a definition of censorship also needs to include instances in which general laws in society prevent musicians from collaborating with other musicians and from recording or performing in certain areas.

In summary, a more detailed definition of the censorship of popular music which takes into consideration the ideas of those cited, and working with definitions put forward by Cloonan (2003) and Marcus (1987) is adopted in this thesis. The censorship of popular music is hereby defined as:

a wide variety of inter-related practices (both legal and extra-legal) which combine to explicitly interfere with the freedom of expression, association and movement of popular musicians to ensure that the articulation of certain facts, opinions or means of expression are stifled, altered and/or prohibited.

1.6 The politics of censorship

The definition of the censorship of popular music accepted here, by including interference with the freedoms of expression, association and movement, necessarily raises issues about the politics of censorship. Absolute freedoms cannot exist for the simple reason that we cannot all have the right to do whatever we want to do without impinging on others' corresponding freedoms to do what they want to do and their rights to be protected from harm. Clearly therefore, censorship, as defined above, will always exist. Jim McGuigan (1992: 202) notes that many forms of restriction on freedom of expression exist in order to protect certain rights of individuals, organizations and states (the same can be said, to varying degrees, of freedom of association and movement). He argues that both defensible and indefensible forms of censorship exist. Defensible forms

of censorship are those which prevent expressions which undermine certain respected freedoms of others. For McGuigan (1992: 203), "absolute freedom of expression is a principle of intolerance", given that the notion of free speech "is used to justify all manner of oppressive discourse, most notably sexist and racist discourses" (McGuigan, 1996: 157).

It is not difficult to sustain the argument that, in most part, the forms of censorship discussed in this thesis would, in McGuigan's terms, be indefensible. State censorship in particular, was often used to maintain forms of oppression. It is also not difficult to understand why (in a society where racial mixing was restricted, movement of blacks in particular was controlled, and protest against oppressive government policies outlawed) opponents of censorship latched onto freedom of expression, freedom of movement and freedom of association as guiding principles in their struggle. Yet this stance, if taken to McGuigan's conclusion, would lead down a path to intolerance. It would allow, for example, hate speech, stalking and harassment.

The problems related to advocating absolute freedoms are clear. Yet throughout this thesis musicians have expressed their resentment of and resistance to restrictions placed on them. At times they have seemed to advocate a form of absolute liberalism under which conditions censorship ought not to exist. Musicians demanding the right to be political or to be apolitical similarly appealed to their right to artistic freedom in their quest to sing about whatever they wished to. It would appear that striving for absolute freedoms was a consequence of and reaction to the totalitarian repression of the South African state.

Yet there is a need for censorship, especially in the form of constitutive censorship (Jansen, in McGuigan, 1996: 156), whereby "latent, subterranean and taken-for-granted rules and operations of discourse" are established by human communities "in order to function socially" (McGuigan, 1996: 156). There is also ongoing debate about the necessity for manifest and state-sanctioned censorship if hate speech, for example, is to be prevented. However, it is the contention here that these issues were not of immediate interest to those struggling against censorship processes, simply because of the extent to which they were censored, and the manner in which censorship was conducted during the

apartheid era. Their immediate concern was in overcoming censorship practices which prevented them from singing things they felt they had the right to sing about.

This thesis takes as its central focuses these very struggles over censorship practices. It is concerned with musicians' struggles to be heard in a repressive context, and with their experiences (and others involved in the censorship of popular music) in this struggle. In exploring the life-worlds of musicians in this way, this thesis attempts to understand the struggle as it was then, and refrains from undermining the experiences of those whose approach to censorship might, in retrospect, appear to have been naïve. Reference to musicians' refusal to self-censor or to euphemism as a form of self-censorship (as discussed in Chapter Seven) are therefore not claims about a utopian society in which censorship might not exist, but rather refer to particular stances adopted by musicians in the process of political struggle, as they find themselves trapped between their need to express their abhorrence at an unjust system on the one hand, and on the other hand, a heavily repressive state hell-bent on stopping them from expressing that very abhorrence. A determination not to self-censor needs to be seen in this light. It is not so much an acceptance of the principle of intolerance as a vow to oppose injustice, despite state repression and possible economic repercussions. As with the struggle against apartheid generally, once the initial oppressive structures were overthrown, broader issues related to the politics of censorship could be addressed, as indeed they have been over the past ten years since democracy was achieved.

1.7 Defining popular music

A precise definition of popular music is open to debate, so much so that many authors of books on popular music do not even attempt to define it! Clearly, 'popular music' is not easy to define. Chris Cutler (1991: 17) argues that the "truth is surely that music does not consist of hard atomic categories, but is a continuum with, at any given time, specific and 'local' configurations. Like any seemingly hard edge, these configurations will dissolve under high magnification". Cutler (1991: 16-17) suggests that 'popular music' is a useful term so long as it remains vague, commonly understood but not contained within a fixed set of parameters. Indeed, there does seem to be at least a fairly common agreement along these lines amongst those who have attempted to define the term (usually the editors of

popular music dictionaries and encyclopaedias). They note the complexity of the issue, but nevertheless tend to regard contemporary 'popular music' as a collective term for forms of music (instrumental and lyrical) loosely rooted in blues and similar non-classical/traditional forms of 20th century music performed and/or recorded as a product for a popular market. See, for example, Johnny Otis (1974: 1), Don Randel (1986: 646-9) and Colin Larkin (1992: 9). But this does seem to be grounded in a Western conception of music. Deanna Campbell Robinson et. al. (1991: 11, 12) have correctly noted that often forms of non-Western music have different central features to Western music. Many forms of Asian music, for example, may be based on very different scale and performance practices. This would suggest that the form and structure of popular music varies according to social context. In some contexts a clear distinction is not made between popular and other forms of music. The contextual diversity in form and structure of popular music stresses the need to consider other possible defining characteristics of 'popular music', in particular the idea that it is performed and/or recorded as a product for a popular market. .

Importantly, David Coplan (1985: 269), Donald Clarke (1995: 6), Johan Fornäs (1995: 102) and Roy Shuker (1998: viii-ix) discuss 'popular' in relation to a mass media market. Accordingly, 'popular music' is not only a stylistic term, but has to do with the commodification of music (as a product in the market place). Closely connected to the point of commodification, Phillip Tagg (1982) stresses the importance of the nature of the storage and distribution of popular music as distinguishing factors. The primary commodity form of popular music is recorded sound, as opposed to oral transmission or musical notation.

Some (Fiske, 1989; Burnett, 1996) argue that a crucial aspect of 'popular music' is its popularity in a specific place at a particular time. For example, Robert Burnett (1996: 37) argues that:

"Popular music is directed at a self-selected audience. This audience essentially chooses or elects what is popular with its listening time and money. Thus quantitatively, popular music is measurable and observable. Numerous charts and hit lists in various countries define what is being played on radio stations and is selling in music stores".

However, it is argued in this thesis that reference to 'popular' is not necessarily an indicator of the popularity of the music (and it certainly is not synonymous with the narrower term 'pop music' although it includes such music). In agreement with this contention, Roy Shuker (1998: viii) notes that some forms of popular music are quite exclusive, for example thrash metal, while classical music is far more popular than such marginal forms of popular music. In addition, censorship and other forms of control, such as play-listing and government broadcast licensing policy, affect the ability of certain music to become popular (in sales terms) in the first place. It is important, however, to take heed of Campbell Robinson et. al.'s (1991: 12) point that in order for music to be 'popular' it does need to be (at the very least) appreciated within the musicians' own communities. This could be a global audience, a national or regional audience or perhaps even a local scene.

Overall the 'popular' in popular music therefore needs to be regarded as something qualitative, not just quantitative. Certainly, Cutler (1991: 4) argues that a strictly numerical analysis would fail to analyse "the travails of music as a struggle for affective and aesthetic expression; unable too to uncover the dynamic which produces innovation in, and refinement of, the expressive means in music". Placing some emphasis on qualitative aspects of the music enables one to consider music which fails to achieve widespread popularity for whatever reason, including a wide range of censorial practices.

Anahid Kassabian (1999: 117-118) has extended the definition of 'popular' to indicate not only its commodification ('popular as mass') but also its liberatory potential ('popular as populist'). Cutler (1991: 16-17) posits a similar distinction. However, it is argued here that while popular music is indeed a contested terrain with the potential to give voice to the interests of marginalized people, music does not *necessarily* have to be liberatory in order to constitute popular music. The 'popular' in 'popular music' in this study, especially given the implications of severe censorship, is taken to reflect both the general style of music and its status as product in the marketplace.

Within the South African context this involves a wide range of styles including folk, blues, mbaqanga, mbube, soul, kwela, marabi, rock, bubblegum, jazz and crossover, excluding strictly classical, choral and traditional music (although at times these have been infused with other styles to influence the sound of popular music). The boundaries

drawn are necessarily fluid. Ample allowance is made for complex musical influences between musical styles worldwide. See for example Barber and Waterman 's (1995) discussion of creolization and Campbell Robinson et. al.'s (1991: 259-60) argument recognizing the complex musical interchange between cultures which has taken place over the centuries. Tony Mitchell (1996: 8) has argued that: "The history of popular music is a constant flow of appropriations in which origins, and notions of originality, are often difficult, if not impossible, to trace". Paul Simon's *Graceland* album effectively illustrates this point. When Simon first heard the South African music which he later incorporated on the *Graceland* album, he remarked that "it sounded like very early rock and roll to me, black, urban, mid-fifties rock and roll" (cited in Garofalo, 1992: 5). Garofalo (1992: 5) comments that: "This is hardly surprising since South Africa, like many other countries, was the recipient of a steady stream of African-American music styles in the 1950s and 1960s". Thus even seemingly traditional music has its popular influences and is best regarded as a neo-traditional form of popular music.

In summary, the definition of contemporary popular music adopted here is in no way definitive, but has been used to draw limits on the scope of this study, particularly excluding strictly choral, traditional and classical styles of music as well as freedom songs as sung at political rallies.

1.8 Locating this study in the 1980s

The 1980s was a crucial period in the history of South African music because of the acute political tension in the country and the ability of music to provide a vehicle for emotive and innovative means of protest. On the political front, various state reforms were introduced, allowing musicians of different races to perform together openly, but other pressures severely restricted the movement and creativity of musicians. Apart from various direct censorship measures, these included the consecutive States of Emergency imposed during the mid-to-late 1980s, allowing the police extensive control over South African citizens. Being stopped at roadblocks and having concerts monitored and houses searched became part of the norm for many politicized musicians.

However, the 1980s was not simply characterized by repression. One of the central theoretical premises of this thesis is Foucault's (1976: 95) notion that where there is power there is resistance. This was clearly manifested in South Africa both before and

during the 1980s. The Soweto uprising of 1976 (which was to profoundly affect the South African political landscape from then on) was a strong display of resistance to years of Nationalist rule, especially the Bantu Education system and the introduction of the policy of 50% of school subjects being taught in Afrikaans in Bantu Education schools – the other 50% being in English. The refusal of African school children to go along with the Bantu Education language policy (in particular) led to changes in the proposed system. The government's attempt to appease coloureds and Indians by creating the tricameral parliament in 1983, whereby they were given unequal political rights (a meaningless vote) was countered by the formation of the United Democratic Front (UDF). The UDF was an umbrella organization initially set up to boycott the tricameral elections of 1983. By the mid-'80s it had become the unofficial internal wing of the African National Congress (ANC), comprising approximately 700 affiliates and over 2 million members (Davenport, 1987: 464). Under the direction of the UDF, stronger and more widespread resistance was met by increased government repression in the form of the States of Emergency already mentioned. This in turn led to further internal resistance as well as international outrage and the stepping-up of international pressure in the form of trade sanctions and the cultural boycott against South Africa. Ongoing pressure ultimately led to the liberalization of the Nationalist government, as it increasingly scrapped petty apartheid laws, allowed protest at the end of the decade, and finally unbanned the ANC, Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) and South African Communist Party (SACP), and released Nelson Mandela in February 1990. These fundamental changes in early 1990 (leading to a democratically elected government in 1994), which were a culmination of the events of the preceding decade, were accompanied by dramatic changes in censorship laws. The struggle against censorship was an integral part of the burgeoning resistance to the Nationalist government during the 1980s.

1980s South Africa is also significant for a study of music censorship for technological and communicative reasons. During this period South Africa was severely isolated from the rest of the world. Its geographical location meant that overseas radio broadcasts could only be heard in South Africa if they were transmitted on short wave (and to a lesser extent on medium wave) transmitters. This was not conducive to establishing a successful foreign-based music station. Television was tightly controlled and only the government-

controlled SABC broadcasts could be received. Swaziland's television station and that of the Bophutatswana bantustan were purely entertainment-oriented and posed little threat to the government's ideologies. The relative (to the 1990s) backward status of technology in the 1980s allowed the South African government power to execute whatever censorship policies and broadcasting restrictions it wanted to put in place. The porous boundaries made possible by the Internet and Satellite television and radio were not available to ordinary South Africans in the 1980s, and so the sort of censorship policies discussed in this thesis were easier to police, at least when it came to controlling broadcast of popular music. Popular music was given low programming priority at the ANC-run Radio Freedom, and in any case the station's poor short-wave quality reception reduced its effectiveness as a music-playing medium for those few people who had short-wave radios capable of reception.

Recording technology, a central component of popular music culture in the 1980s, was also relatively unsophisticated and expensive and therefore controlled by a few powerful record companies. Access to recording studios was possible for anyone with the money to afford them, but there were only two pressing plants in the country, controlled by EMI and Gallo. As discussed in Chapter Five, the pressing plants could be prosecuted for pressing illegal material, and so instituted strict control over what was pressed. The only alternative was to copy music onto home-recorded cassettes. This is in contrast to the computer technology of the late 1990s and the 21st century, which allows individuals working at home to produce good quality albums which they can burn onto compact disc. Just as new recording technology is able to violate copyright through illegal reproduction and the subsequent dissemination of recordings, it is able to violate censorship by bypassing traditional centralized gate-keeping institutions. As Paul Théberge (1999: 223) argues, sound technology is "a nodal point, a site for the playing out of a diverse set of artistic, social and political tensions between industry and popular culture". Here it is stressed that the tensions need to be viewed more broadly, as taking place between parties with an interest in popular music, such as governments and censorial pressure groups.

The limits placed on musicians by centralized industry control of predominant recording technology during the 1980s makes it an interesting decade to explore; especially given state attempts to pressure the record industry into compliance. Musicians were restricted

from freely recording their music onto vinyl and (in the late '80s) compact disc. Yet the existence of independent record companies and cassette tapes potentially allowed musicians to record and disseminate music through independent channels (see Chapter Eight). Technological conditions in the 1980s certainly made it possible for censors to exercise tighter control over the popular music industry than is possible in the more open era of computer-based home studios, the internet, compact disc technology and MP3s. In many senses, therefore, this is a study of a form of censorship control of popular music which is no longer possible.

1.8 The focus on South African musicians

Clearly the censorship of popular music during the 1980s affected South African as well as non-South African musicians. Yet this thesis focuses primarily on South African musicians and other South African individuals and organizations involved in the context of popular music censorship. The central reason for this has been to explore the specific dynamics confronting South African musicians and others involved in the South African recording industry, facing censorship obstacles in their home country. Censorship in this context made it potentially difficult for musicians to be heard by local audiences. The additional obstacles put in the way of musicians in the form of the cultural boycott makes the focus on South African musicians even more pertinent. The focus on South African musicians and recording industry thus provides for an exploration of an extremely difficult music context, where local musicians truly had to struggle to be heard, particularly if their message was deemed controversial by those with the power to censor.

Given the local focus of this thesis, most of the examples are South African. However, in the chapters on mechanisms of censorship, a number of overseas examples are nevertheless provided. These examples explore and illustrate the rationale of South African censors and censorship processes, and are especially referred to when insufficient suitable local examples are available. The discussion of the cultural boycott includes considerable reference to overseas musicians, given that the cultural boycott was a United Nations-orchestrated strategy and many examples of its effects involved foreign musicians. The chapters on resistance to censorship hardly refer to foreign musicians. This is not to downplay the role of foreign musicians in protesting injustices within South

Africa at the time. On the contrary, a large body of foreign anti-apartheid resistance music exists and played a role in encouraging counter-hegemonic activity and mobilizing resistance to the Nationalist government (see, for example, Denselow, 1990: 186-202; 275-287). However, as indicated above, the focus of this thesis is specifically on resistance to censorship of popular music. The central focus of foreign music was on resisting apartheid more broadly, and was directed at a foreign audience. For this reason little attention was given to specifically bypassing South African censors. On the contrary, it was often good for publicity for foreign musicians to have their music banned in South Africa. In addition, many musicians did not want to have their music released in South Africa at all. The struggle against censorship, therefore, mostly took place on the local (South African) level, involving South African agents. For this reason I have opted to focus on South African musicians and others involved in the South African music industry.

1.9 Race, class, sex and gender in South Africa

Any study of South African society needs to take into account the particular dynamics of race, class, sex and gender which developed through the apartheid era. This section begins by tracing early analyses of race in South Africa. These tend to focus on its relation to class, but the discussion will lead into a consideration of sex and gender as integrally important variables. It is not necessary to repeat established arguments here, or to provide a detailed historical account of apartheid. This discussion will necessarily be brief. More detailed analysis can be found in the sources cited.

In 1961 South Africa entered a peculiar post-colonial phase, which Patrick Fitzgerald (1989: 163) refers to as 'internal colonialism' in which a white power bloc acted to preserve white hegemony. This involved the Nationalist government's intensification of racial segregation and inequality, begun under British colonialism and formalized when the National Party (NP) came to power in 1948. Accordingly South African citizens were divided along the lines of government-defined race and ethnic groups. Political and economic rights varied according to one's race. In order for the Nationalist government to maintain dominance they needed to perpetuate the idea of those who were not whites as

'others', not permitted to represent themselves. Rather they were "contained and represented" by the dominating racial/racist framework of apartheid (Said, 1995: 40).

Racial separation was enforced from the petty-apartheid level of separate toilets and beaches according to race, to the grand scale apartheid scheme of separate 'homelands' for different ethnic Africans. In attempting to give credence to its policy of separate development, the South African government established separate homelands for South Africa's African ethnic groups. The plan was for these to be granted independence, so that Africans could gain full citizenship in these 'independent states' only. In a perpetuation of the notion of African as 'other' they were then treated as foreigners within 'white' South Africa (which constituted 87% of the land). In the face of resistance, just four of the nine homelands were ever granted 'independence'. These were Transkei (1976), Bophutatswana (1977), Ciskei (1980) and Venda (1981). With the granting of this independence by the South African government (not recognized internationally), puppet governments were allowed to practice self-rule, but under the scrutiny of the South African government who controlled the purse strings in the form of 'foreign aid'. As discussed in Chapter Four, the SABC perpetuated ethnic and racial difference through its introduction of different radio stations for different races and ethnic groups. When television was introduced in the mid-1970s a similar (although not as extensive) policy was pursued.

How to make theoretical sense of apartheid was the source of ongoing debate among academics. For liberal critics such as Norman Bromberger (1982), Merle Lipton (1986) and David Welsh (1987) racism was irrational, with independent roots. They argued that apartheid went against the interests of capitalism because it interfered with a free market. For example, it was argued that restriction on movement was detrimental to urban capital, which needed free movement of labour.

In contrast, neo-Marxists such as Frederick Johnstone (1970, 1976), Harold Wolpe (1972), Martin Legassick (1974), Dan O'Meara (1975), and John Saul and Stephen Gelb (1986) argued that apartheid existed to meet the economic needs of capital. Capitalism benefited from the reserves and controlled cheap labour. Apartheid (racist) laws were therefore viewed as functional, based in the economy, passed in the interests of capital. Racial oppression and capitalist exploitation were seen to "feed on" and "reinforce" one

another (Saul and Gelb, 1986: 64).

Deborah Posel (1983) attempted to supersede the liberal/neo-Marxist impasse by viewing apartheid, depending on context (for example, how laws affected different sectors of capital) as both functional and dysfunctional to capitalism. As she points out, "what is fundamental and distinctive about the South African case is the *unity* of class and race as the source of structural differentiation in the society" (Posel, 1983: 62).

Thiven Reddy (2000: 62-65) is also critical of the functionalist and instrumentalist assumptions of the neo-Marxist position. However, Reddy (2000: 63) argues for an "analysis of white supremacy as a discourse on the 'Other' (which) opens up other aspects such as the fear of miscegenation, the importance of protecting 'civilization' and the generalized world-view that different 'races' are destined to occupy differently allocated positions in a social hierarchy; and we must not forget to emphasize the salience of 'white supremacy' in itself". Peter Alexander (1987: 5-28) and Alex Callinicos (1992: 6) argue that the origins of notions of white supremacy are intricately entwined with the development of capitalism. However, whatever the origins of racist assumptions, it would be mistaken to conflate the origins of racism with the reasons for its continued existence.

Much of the writing and analysis on South Africa's politics during the apartheid era focused on race and, as discussed, its relation to class and (to a lesser extent) ethnicity. As is often the case, the issue of women's oppression was either ignored or simply regarded as an issue of secondary importance. For Marxists and African Nationalists, women's oppression was an issue to be dealt with after liberation. Until such time, women were simply expected to support the liberation struggle, and not be divisive by calling for an end to sexual oppression (see for example Ramphele and Boonzaier, 1988: 153). However, many (particularly feminist) activists did not regard women's liberation as a separate struggle to other contests engaged in by South African women – black and white. During the 1980s a broad conceptualization of feminism developed which extended beyond the confines of struggles against gender discrimination alone, accepting that sex and gender struggles were entwined with community struggles against racism, poverty and other forms of marginalization.

South Africans had multiple identities and voices. De La Rey (1997: 7) stresses that in

South Africa “we are simultaneously classed, raced and gendered. Hence, we cannot talk about my experience of being a woman without talking about my race and my class for how I experience the social world and others’ responses to me are inextricably tied to all these axes of difference”.

Dominant discursive practices constituted different subjects according to varying criteria. Just as the structures of white domination constituted subjects as ‘the other’ to secure the assuredness of white identity (Reddy, 2000: 221), relationships based on sex, class, ethnicity, sexual preference, age and so on, similarly subjected ‘others’ to forms of domination. However, dominant discourses only partially and in a fragmentary way represented dominated groups. The dominated groups, in resisting dominant discourses, constructed alternative identities (in struggles) to represent themselves (Reddy, 200: 221). Thus there were many contests over identity which took place in multiple sites, giving rise to multiple identities or “diversity of subjective positions” (Hall, 1996c: 443). Based on this understanding of multiple identities, Stuart Hall (1996c: 444) argues that “the question of the black subject cannot be represented without reference to the dimensions of class, gender, sexuality and ethnicity”. Most definitely, failure to recognize differences makes it impossible to understand the particular experiences of people subjected to a nexus of different dominating discourses.

1.10 Race, class, sex and gender in the South African music context

Although musicians considered in this thesis can be regarded as united in their struggles to be heard, they did not share a common identity, given the interplay of different discourses that affected them in divergent ways. This is true of race, class, ethnicity, sex and gender. Apartheid meant that musicians of different races did not have a shared experience of life in South Africa. Apartheid laws did, to a certain extent, restrict the movement of white musicians (in accessing black areas), but the overwhelming affect was on black musicians who were severely constrained by laws governing movement as well as property and broader political rights. The psychological effects of being branded the ‘inferior other’ and treated accordingly were a severe disadvantage for black musicians which white musicians did not have to deal with. This was not restricted to practising as a musician, but began with birth into a society of deep segregation and

inequality. Ray Phiri (Interview, 2001) spoke about the humiliation of growing up in a two-roomed shack with no privacy, of having to lie in bed listening to one's parents making love, because they had nowhere else to go:

You would grow up hearing funny noises, and you get scared. You think that there's something wrong, only to find that nothing's wrong. You think that your father is beating your mom to death or something of that kind, only to find that they're coupling.

Restriction of movement also led to many instances of humiliation for black South Africans, including musicians. Siphso Gumede (Interview, 1998) described how helpless he felt when he, his girlfriend and child were arrested, driven around in the back of a police van all night before being put into a police cell for breaking the pass law after performing a gig in Cape Town one night:

We were charged with staying in a restricted area – coloured area – we were not supposed to be there. And if you didn't have an ID you had to pay R55, so you had to say you were guilty and then you paid R50 if you had your ID. And then it was like: 'Guilty of what?' They said, 'You were found in the wrong area' ... And that was ugly because I was looking at myself and saying, 'I'm really hopeless here. My child is being put in the cell and there's nothing that I can do'.

Siphso Mabuse (Interview, 1998) revealed how police confronted him and fellow musicians after a show in a white area late one night:

We played in a club in Highlands North. Probably very few, if any, black bands played in Highlands North in these clubs. We were allowed to be on stage, and the only other place we could be was the kitchen, where we had to dress up (and we had our hamburgers) to go play on stage. It was called the Underground, but we were not allowed to interact with the audience. And one of these nights we came out and our car wouldn't start. And everybody had gone home. And we started trying to push the car. And there was a police patrol with a black cop and this boy who couldn't have been about eighteen if not younger. And he said to us, what are we doing here? It's after three o'clock in the morning. And we said, 'We're a band, and we've just been playing in this club and unfortunately our car could not start, so we've been trying to push the car'. Then he asked us for our

passes and we showed him, and he looked at them and gave them back to us, and eventually said, 'You're what? A band? What fucken band? A kaffir band. Who did you sing for?' So we said, 'No we were paid to sing'. [He said:] 'You mustn't come with your shit here. You all look just like orang-outangs'. We kept quiet, we did not want to laugh in his presence, you know. And he said, 'Get the fuck out of town. Quick. Quick'. We said, 'Thank you boss, can we just start the car?' So we pushed the car and fortunately we managed to start the car¹.

The murky area of overlapping racial and class inequality is evidenced in Ray Phiri's discussion of growing up in a shack, and is again clear in the case of the Soul Brothers. Moses Ngwenya (Interview, 1998) of the Soul Brothers related how he came from an extremely poor family of ten children and whose mother died when he was young:

I grew up at sisters' and brothers' places, and you know, when you grew up you want to have some money to buy clothes and food and all that. So at first we did have problems that we didn't have even money to catch a train from Soweto to town. But we were lucky to produce a record which sold at the time. And from there we didn't look back.

Ngwenya's story underlines the importance of class position for musicians. Many white musicians came from middle class backgrounds and often even had university degrees and/or other expertise and skills, which they could fall back on for financial security. Although serious about music, these musicians could nevertheless treat it as a part-time activity, to explore alongside their full-time employment or at the same time as studying. For musicians from a working-class background (not only black, but mostly) music was the sole source of employment and it was therefore far more important that they make a living from it. This obviously had important implications for self-censorship. The risk of having a song banned from airplay or distribution through retail outlets was far more severe for a musician without a supplementary source of income.

The position for white musicians was very different. To begin with, they tended to be less political, as is revealed by Neil Cloud (Interview, 1998), of late 1970s band Rabbitt, one of South Africa's most successful white bands ever:

¹ In the interview Mabuse related the policeman's comments in Afrikaans. I have provided a translation.

I don't think we realized the severity of the situation in the country, and just how the whole situation had been handled. I think we did know. I think we knew about the pass laws and what was happening, but I think we just got on with it. You know. And it wasn't a situation of even thinking that Mr Mandela was in the right or in the wrong. I don't think we'd been educated. You know we understood Mr Mandela to be somebody who stood for terrorism and to blow up the country. And I think we all grew and learnt a lot over the last twenty years with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. I think that Rabbitt was unaffected. I think we missed that. It just missed it. It was just a happy band playing great music, having great concerts, enjoying ourselves. You know, and then the reality struck... We were this white supremacist band.

As the previous accounts show, for Black South Africans the possibility that the harsh realities of apartheid could simply pass them by was not an option. Not only were they the daily targets of racist legislation and related economic deprivation, but the implementation of racial segregation affected them more severely. Clout drummer Ingy Herbst (Interview, 1998) related how:

Black friends were thrown out of my house. The black and white situation was never an issue for me. But then again it was all very easy to say something like that being a white person at that point and even although I suffered the indignity of having police throw people out of my home, the indignity for the people who were thrown out was far worse.

Herbst was opposed to apartheid segregation but she was not on the receiving end of the harshest realities of apartheid laws. Consequently, she was able to feel affronted by the indignity of the laws yet was never severely affected by them. Indeed, she does not recall any politically related obstacles to the Clout's music success, other than finding it difficult to procure overseas tours in places where the cultural boycott had begun to take effect. The harshness of apartheid laws escaped the band, which performed light-hearted songs that never sought to address South Africa's political problems.

Although white musicians were generally far better off than black musicians, a two-year period of conscription into the South African Defence Force (SADF) for all white males was a source of major resentment and opposition for many white musicians. It is not

surprising therefore, that many songs of resistance to conscription and the activities of the SADF were written during the 1980s. These tended to reflect the difficulties confronting the white male experience, especially notions of militarized masculinity and the expectation that white men should be prepared to kill and be killed for a system that some believed was abhorrent.

However, it was most commonly women musicians who confronted the inter-related issues of sex and gender. To varying degrees they suffered from widespread sexism in South African society and the music industry. During the apartheid era African women were often left to fend for themselves and their children in the impoverished rural areas because their husbands were away for most of the year, forced off the land to attempt to earn a living as migrant labourers in the urban areas. If women sought work in the urban areas, they usually had to resort to poorly paid and oppressive domestic work (as was the experience of many black woman singers, including Miriam Makeba and Margaret Singana). Within African culture girls were generally not encouraged as much as boys, from an early age, to be musicians and learn to play a musical instrument. This is not to say that African women were not encouraged to be musical. On the contrary, music was an integral component of African culture for women as well as men. Mary Rörich (1989: 80) describes how music was an important part of many ceremonies and daily processes in which women sing (such as singing of lullabies, work songs, educational songs, and so on). As a result most black South African women musicians have been singers and not instrumentalists. The most well known exceptions have been Emily Blackbird and Hope Khumalo (who both played piano in bands in the late 1930's), Lynette Leeuw (who played alto sax in the 1960's) and Nothembi Mkwane (who played guitar). The situation has not been a great deal better for white women. Most white woman popular musicians have been lead vocalists. However there are far more exceptions amongst white than black women musicians, such as Edi Niederlander as well as members of Clout, Peach and Flux.

In a situation typical of women's position in the music industry globally, life in the South African music industry was difficult. The music business is notoriously competitive and ruthless, a harshness often exacerbated by apartheid in the South African context. A clear example of the severity of apartheid-induced exploitation was the

experience of veteran musician Madosini Manquina, who grew up and has continued to live in a poor rural village in Transkei. She is a gifted songwriter, musician and instrument maker and plays three traditional Xhosa instruments (the umrhubhe or mouthbow, the uhadi or mouth harp and the isitolotolo or Jew's harp). In the 1970s a foreign film crew recorded her music and used it as the soundtrack for the film *Xhosa Macbeth*. The film company took advantage of her illiteracy, her inability to speak English and the low wages paid to black South Africans. She was paid a one-off sum of R8 for eight songs. The songs were also used extensively on radio without any royalties being paid to her (Melt 2000, 1999).

In the music industry successful women performers generally fulfilled a stereotype of women as backing singers or as attractive vocalists with a predominantly (if not fully) male backing band. Women were seldom recruited as instrumentalists. Consequently they were rarely portrayed as true craftspeople in the music business (especially in the singer-songwriter mould). This correlates with Cynthia Lont's (1992: 243) observation that mainstream music in Western societies (and clearly in South Africa, too) has been based on the experience of males, "subsuming women's experiences within men's experiences or ignoring women's experiences completely". Amina Mama (1997:79) agrees with Lont, arguing that: "So far we have seen men appropriating and interpreting African 'tradition' and 'culture' in selective ways that enhance their own power and authority over others". Indeed, the history of women's relationship to the music industry in South Africa has been one of a sexist record industry expecting women to be sex objects rather than just performers. For example, Lara Allen (1997: 4) points out that in the 1950s:

"Drum and its sister publications provided ... a medium through which top personalities in music, theatre and sport became Hollywood-type stars. Anxious to grace their pages with pictures of beautiful women (so much more interesting if they were also interesting and creative), pictorials like *Drum* gave women singers a great deal of space, substantially bolstering their careers. Top singers like Dolly Rathebe, Dorothy Masuka and Miriam Makeba became household names, no longer just musicians but also cover girls and leaders of fashion, icons of glamour and sophistication".

This view is supported by Rörich (1989: 90) in her discussion of black women

performers in Sophiatown, who were, “(a)dored when young and beautiful, (but) forgotten when their looks and luck ran out”. This emphasis on looks is further stressed by the way in which “sexual titillation was generally considered the most vital ingredient of a successful show or jazz performance; women were often chosen more for their sexual attraction than for their musical talent” (Rörich, 1989: 90). Edi Niederlander (Interview, 1998) agreed that women singers were often subjected to the male gaze in this manner. In the 1970s and early ’80s, despite being one of the top folk singers in the country, she couldn’t get a recording contract. As she explained:

Every woman at that point had to be Miss America. You still had to have that kind of image *before* the music. So a lot of places basically turned me down with that as one of the excuses.

The question of looks did not hinder male musicians in the same way. Certainly some men had looks that were more marketable than others but few, if any, South African male musicians have complained about record company pressure to have good looks.

The preceding discussion makes it clear that South African musicians during the apartheid era cannot be regarded as a homogenous group. They certainly possessed multiple identities, affected differently according to the interplay of dominating discourses to which they were subjected, and to which they responded according to their own symbolic capital. These subject positions shifted according to processes of identification, which according to Stuart Hall (1996a: 2,3), involved an ongoing process of construction, never permanent, but “conditional, lodged in contingency”. Yet despite these hybrid identities, South African musicians were nevertheless loosely united in having to confront various censorship structures. Different forms of censorship affected musicians according to their individual identities, which in turn affected their responses. These will become clearer during the course of this thesis.

1.11 The structure of this thesis

This thesis is divided into three sections, each comprising three chapters. The first section provides the conceptual, theoretical and methodological context for the rest of the study. Building on some of the issues introduced in the first chapter, Chapter Two provides a suitable theoretical framework within which to situate an analysis of South African

popular music censorship. Music censorship involves a contest over musical statements, between the censors and the censored. This contest is explored through the works of Antonio Gramsci, Michel Foucault and Pierre Bourdieu. These theorists share a concern with power relations in societies characterized by social inequality. Their social inquiries share important features of relevance to this study. They were interested in how power is exercised, why resistance to social inequality in their own societies was insignificant, the relationship between structure and resistance, and they all posited theories which moved beyond simple binary conceptions of struggle. The way in which they understood these different areas varied, but they each offered important insights which have been integrated into the ensuing theoretical paradigm. It would be mistaken to simply apply these theories to South Africa without taking cognisance of local dynamics. For this reason the ideas of these aforementioned theorists have been infused with those of post-colonial and other writers who have written from the perspective of the subaltern. This has allowed for a theoretical framework which accommodates the form and level of resistance to popular music censorship in South Africa which evolved in the 1980s.

Chapter Three explains and justifies the research approach adopted in this research. It questions my own position as a white male researcher in South Africa, explores the dynamics of identity in South Africa and how this affects my research, and it briefly traces the research process. A strong emphasis has been placed on in-depth interviews with a broad range of people, particularly musicians. Consequently the chapter also indicates how the various research methods were interpreted so as to provide an accurate historical account of censorship while reflecting the experiences of those researched as honestly and effectively as possible.

Section Two is concerned with mechanisms of censorship, while Section Three focuses on strategies of resistance to the censorship of popular music. These two sections caused me a great amount of anxiety as I attempted to provide a structure which accurately captured the ongoing spiralling relationship between structure and resistance in the contest over censorship. Ideally each instance of censorship should be followed immediately by discussions of resistance to it, but having unsuccessfully attempted a structure which pursued this ideal, I settled for the current structure. This is because very often the same form of resistance was adopted to overcome different forms of censorship,

and thus a format which attempted to replicate the fluidity of the actual exchanges between musicians and censors would be very repetitive and difficult to follow. The current structure is therefore simpler to follow, but needs to be read as an ongoing interaction between the two sections, which deal with censorship and resistance, respectively.

Chapter Four provides an account of government mechanisms of censorship. This includes the official (centralized) government censorship process, other laws which allowed for censorship of popular music, SABC censorship and more repressive means of silencing musicians, such as police harassment of musicians. It is revealed that some members of civil society were complicit in government censorship and that there were often contests and contradictions within the arena of government censorship itself.

Chapter Five explores self-censorship practiced by various non-government institutions. These include record companies (majors and independents), independent radio stations, retail outlets and distribution companies, venues and musicians themselves.

Chapter Six considers a form of censorship practiced by anti-apartheid resisters. This includes calls for musicians to play particular styles of music (for example 'authentic' South African music) or to avoid certain forms of music, such as mbaqanga which at one time was seen as a vehicle for apartheid propaganda. The central focus of the chapter is on boycott calls, most notably the United Nations cultural boycott but also the boycott of the Bureau for Information propaganda song of 1986. It is argued that despite the liberal and progressive motives underlying these boycott strategies, their impact on musicians was very similar to that of more conservative sources of censorship.

Chapter Seven is the first chapter to document and analyse resistance to censorship. It specifically focuses on textual resistance to censorship. Music as text includes both lyrics and the music itself. Censorship almost always focused on lyrics, but resistance to censorship could occur on a musical level. Some examples of how this was done are provided; but this is not a musicological thesis, so in-depth musicological analyses of songs are avoided. A variety of lyrical means of resistance are discussed in this chapter including symbolism and camouflaged lyrics. While some of these constitute forms of self-censorship they nevertheless allow for innovative and creative means of expression which attempt to bypass censorship.

Chapter Eight details areas of resistance to censorship beyond the form and/or lyrics of music. This includes live performance, printed resistance (in the form of record covers, posters, fanzines and so on), legal challenges of censorship decisions, going into exile and forging links with political organizations. Attention is also given to some of the strategies adopted by the more innovative independent record companies, 3rd Ear Music and Shifty Records in particular. These chapters reveal the extent to which musicians and others resisting censorship were able to create spaces within which effective resistance could take place.

The concluding chapter reflects on the theoretical framework adopted, and how this has assisted in providing an understanding of the nuances and complexities of the struggles over popular music censorship which took place during the 1980s. The chapter sum-ups the ideas and arguments put forward throughout the thesis, emphasizing the manner in which those involved in the contest sought to reposition themselves according to the most suitable strategies available to them. Throughout the 1980s resistant musicians devised means of overcoming censorship and making themselves heard. They proved that resistance is possible, even in contexts of severe repression. Despite apartheid censorship, creative and meaningful spaces of resistance were discovered and successfully manipulated.

CHAPTER TWO

Locating the censorship of South African popular music within a theoretical context of cultural struggle

Why don't you sing about the fish in the sea?
Why don't you sing about the blue sky?
Why don't you sing about the fantasy?
Because mister I've seen
Mud coloured dusty blood
Bare feet on the burning bus
Broken teeth and a rifle butt
On the road to Mdanstane

(“Mdantsane” (1983) – Juluka)

2.1 Introduction

Censorship entails the attempt by some to silence others, involving the desire to prohibit the expression of undesired views. Within the context of autocratic societies, rigid mechanisms for practicing censorship are usually put into place by the state, in an attempt to safeguard its interests as part of a struggle to maintain its hegemony. In the South African context of the 1980s these mechanisms centred on the state's apartheid policies and closely related religious-based legitimacy. Although the apartheid state was intricately and deeply involved with the censorship of published materials, censorship was only a minor strategy within its overall system of control, and furthermore, the state was not the sole instigator of censorship within South Africa. Neither censors nor those who resisted censorship constituted single monolithic bodies acting cohesively. Pressure groups, particularly those of a religious nature, openly called for censorship during the period in question. Those who opposed censorship varied from political activists to individuals simply wanting their ideas to be recorded or published in their original form, and sometimes strategies of overcoming censorship developed as an unintended consequence of other musical goals.

The central theorists whose works inform this chapter are Antonio Gramsci, Michel Foucault and Pierre Bourdieu. Selective concepts from their work are employed in a 'multiperspectival' approach (Kellner, 1995b: 98), in an attempt to explore the nuances

and complexities of censorship struggles in apartheid South Africa. All three have in common the objective of supplanting class reductionism and vulgar materialism without entirely dispensing with a class perspective. They all grapple with the persistence of social inequality without powerful resistance. Yet, importantly for an analysis of censorship in South Africa during the 1980s, they believe that resistance is possible despite oppressive structures. It is on this basis that the work of these theorists and of others too (such as Ron Eyerman and Andrew Jamison, and Stuart Hall) is applied to censorship of popular music in South Africa, developing a framework within which resistance to censorship structures can be situated.

In the first section of this chapter it is argued that contests around the censorship of popular music involved struggles over hegemony. Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and fields are used to explore the operation of censorship. Fields, like hegemony, are contested. A neo-Gramscian view of hegemony is adopted, one which places a strong emphasis on the fluid nature of alliances that constituted hegemonic blocs as well as instances of counter-hegemony. Certainly, spaces need to be found within which to recognize that musicians were able to operate according to their own agendas and not consistently (if ever) on behalf of a political movement. The argument here, informed by the work of Michel Foucault, is against the use of binary positions in favour of a more nuanced approach which takes into account the subtleties and complexities of cultural struggles surrounding the censorship of popular music.

The second section of the chapter examines the struggle of musicians against censorship. It focuses specifically on musicians' attempts to create spaces of resistance within which they could overcome censorship. This section of the chapter explores the extent to which musicians – through acts of resistance – articulated and transformed culture, opening spaces in which particular forms of artistic expression emerged (Eyerman and Jamison, 1998: 160-5). It is argued that in direct response to censorship structures, musicians were able to creatively combine culture and politics to produce new strategies for overcoming censorship.

However, although a relationship between censorship struggles and broader political struggle existed, the successful outcome of struggles against censorship was not the end to apartheid, but something much less ambitious: simply registering dissent through

music or related activities despite censorship. It is for this reason that the struggle against censorship was fragmented and often isolated, with each musician or group developing individual strategies of making him/her/themselves heard. A joint forum against censorship was never specifically formed, and thus instances of success were isolated and individual, and the final demise of apartheid censorship developed out of broader political struggle rather than as a consequence of a direct musicians' struggle against censorship. Different musicians, by positioning themselves in various ways, actively participated in broader struggles against dominant discourses, only a small part of which entailed the censorship of music. This chapter attempts to provide a theoretical framework which focuses narrowly on censorship struggles, but does so within the broader social-political dynamics of South African society at the time. Importantly, the following discussion provides a theoretical framework within which to situate censorship struggles, and does not attempt to provide a systematic theory of music censorship.

2.2 Locating South African popular music censorship within a context of hegemonic struggle

In the discussion of censorship in Chapter One it was argued that discourse is dependent on the social conditions of its production (Bourdieu, 1993b: 90). Culture plays an important mediating role in the way discourses within class societies are produced and reproduced. For Bourdieu (1977: 72), the structures constitutive of particular environments produce 'habitus': the assimilated "social grammar of taste, knowledge, and behaviour inscribed permanently in the body schema and the schemes of thought of each developing person" (Giroux, 1983: 89). The habitus acts as a mediating link between structures, social practice and reproduction in such a way that the dominant discourse (in the South African context viewed more broadly than in narrow class terms) does not automatically and systematically impose itself on oppressed groups. Instead, through the process of mediation, it is partly reproduced by them. As such individuals do not automatically act out any attitude or dispositions which they have inherited, rather individual actions are continuously adaptive (Robbins, 2000: 29).

Nevertheless, the power of the dominant group capacitates it with the ability to impose its cultural framework on the other groups, so that its culture becomes the only one

accepted as legitimate (Bourdieu, 1977: 167-8). As such, discourse is controlled through the positing of external rules. These rules are an integral part of structural fields, which strongly influence the trajectories of the groups within each field. Bourdieu's notion of a field is "a partially autonomous field of forces, but also a field of struggle for positions within it" (Harker, et. al. 1990: 8). While fields comprise institutions and rules, they are also made up of the interaction between institutions, rules and practices (Webb, et. al. 2002: 22). An individual's power within a given field depends on his/her position within the field, and his/her habitus. Within the field, one's habitus operates as a "strategy-generating principle, enabling agents to cope with unforeseen and ever-changing situations" (Bourdieu, 1977: 72). Those within a position of power are able to designate what constitutes 'authentic' capital within a particular field (Webb, et. al. 2002: 22). Within subcultures 'subcultural capital' (Thornton, 1995: 11) can be developed, enabling subcultural positions of power to come into play in particular fields.

For Bourdieu (1993b: 91), entering a particular field positions an individual within a specific structure, the discourse of which is dependent on the individual's economic, social and cultural situation, but in addition, mediated by political alignment. The regulatory power of that discourse subjects the individual, regulating what can be said by whom under what conditions (Foucault, 1975). This means that "one needs an analysis of the social conditions of the constitution of the group in which the discourse is produced, because that is where one finds the true principle of what could and what could not be said there" (Bourdieu, 1993b: 92).

The South African government certainly implemented censorship as an intended limitation of discourse, part of a system of classification, order and distribution designed to prevent "the emergence of the contingent" (Diawara, 1997: 457). The result of this "discursive subjugation" (Diawara, 1997: 457) was that freedom of speech was curbed, involving the construction of obstacles to be negotiated by anyone wanting to express a published opinion or utterance. It can therefore be seen that publication and cultural performance fields were set up which, apart from aesthetic rules, were governed by the dominant political discourse according to the government's moral-political framework. These fields were "force-fields" acting on all those who entered them, "and acting in a differential manner according to the position they occup(ied) there". They were

simultaneously “fields of competitive struggle which tend(ed) to conserve or transform” the force-fields (Bourdieu, 1996: 232). In the context of South African censorship, this struggle was around popular music messages rather than aesthetics. Accordingly, censorship created structures and challenges to be overcome by the censored or potentially censored who, despite such constraints, wanted to be heard. The foremost struggle for musicians against censorship during the apartheid era, therefore, was in all instances a struggle to be heard, no matter the form of censorship. In this sense, struggles over censorship can be conceived in terms of tensions over moral-political considerations between production and reproduction. The habitus of musicians prevented “total contingency” as musicians negotiated the “constant tension between the urge to create and the urge to conserve” (Robbins, 2000: 40), where ‘creation’ is incorporated to refer to writing and singing about issues which fall outside the ambit of what is acceptable according to the dominant discourse.

In conceptualizing a framework for such struggle, Robin Balliger (1995: 13) asserts that “music is neither transcendental nor trivial, but inhabits a site where hegemonic processes are contested”. This clearly was the case in South Africa during the 1980s. A Gramscian model of hegemony and counter-hegemony views culture as a site of struggle between hegemonic or ruling social and cultural forms of domination and counter-hegemonic forms of resistance and struggle. While not focusing directly on music, in the *Prison Notebooks*, Gramsci did consider the question of fascist and anti-fascist art and what kind of literature should be supported and rejected in class struggle (Holub, 1992: 4). Gramsci certainly expected writers to show their colours and take a stand in the cultural struggle (Holub, 1992: 8). As such, Gramsci situated art within the struggle to support or resist the status quo. Crucial to Gramsci’s theorization of this struggle are his concepts of hegemony and counter-hegemony. Hegemony is the power or dominance that one social group holds over others, but does not simply deal with social power itself; it is also a method for gaining and maintaining power (Lull, 1995: 31). Hegemony involves a situation in which a provisional alliance between certain social groups exerts authority over subordinate groups. This is not realised through force alone, but also through winning and shaping consent so that the power of the dominant groups appears to be both legitimate and natural (Hall, 1977: 338). As a concept, hegemony firstly assists our

understanding of how political society, through the use of the institutions of law, police, army and prisons, coerces society into consenting to the status quo. Secondly, and most significantly, hegemony assists our understanding of how political and civil society, through the use of institutions including education, religion and the media, contribute to the production of meaning and values which in turn produce, direct and maintain the consent of society to the status quo.

In Gramscian terms, the apartheid state can be seen to have maintained the status quo through a combination of force and shaping consent, with the police and military exerting violence to maintain order, while other institutions such as components of the media, religion and education attempted to induce consent to the dominant ideology. As such, the state – in both its overt and subtler attempts at control – appeared to constitute a single oppressor against which resistance was mobilised. However, it is the contention of this thesis that neither the state nor resistance to it was a single unified force, rather the entire terrain in which the musical scene took place was fragmented and involved complex alliances and resulting frictions. The contests over South African music censorship in the 1980s involved constant contests over power distribution, not narrowly restricted to (economic) class struggle. The state's dominance was maintained through provisional alliances between historic blocs and interest groups (white nationalists, capitalists, Calvinists, bantustan leaders) who exerted authority over subordinate groups (blacks, the working class, women). These alliances shifted according to crises of legitimacy (whether political, ideological or economic) so that, for example, by the mid-1980s, South Africa's entry into the stage of monopoly capital and the changed emphasis from mining and agriculture to manufacture necessitated a relaxing of apartheid laws to allow for the development of an urban-based stable and skilled black workforce. For Tomaselli and Tomaselli (1987: 43) this resulted in the state's attempt "to establish a coalition of interests between politically dominant groups and the white and black middle classes". As noted in Chapter Four, this led to a concomitant liberalization of government censorship, which became less concerned with images of racial mixing and focused more specifically on messages of political incitement and insurgence.

Through the incorporation of Foucault's analysis of power, hegemony can be seen to contribute towards a form of social cohesion achieved not only through force and consent, but also by means of

“practices, techniques, and methods which infiltrate minds and bodies, cultural practices which cultivate behaviour and beliefs, tastes, desires, and needs as seemingly naturally occurring qualities and properties embodied in the psychic and physical reality (or ‘truth’) of the human subject” (Smart, 1986: 160).

By focusing on the different modes by which cultures make subjects of human beings (such as the family, school and media), it is clear that forms of power exercised throughout individuals' everyday lives shape them into more docile individuals, according to the dominant discourse.

A sophisticated nexus is created in which all the elements of alliances combine in a collective will which functions as the protagonist of political action during the hegemony's entire duration (Mouffe, 1981: 225). The hegemony is not fixed, it is negotiated and renegotiated, or as Bourdieu (1990: 141) puts it, is “constantly broken and restored”, perpetuated or subverted. This hegemony is most susceptible to contest when there is a “mismatch between the expectations of habitus and the opportunities offered by the fields” (Swartz, 1997: 290). Hegemony's vulnerability to contestation makes allowances for counter-hegemonic processes.

Barry Smart (1986: 170) notes that the forms of struggle and resistance that are the basis of counter-hegemonic strategies develop around the very techniques that constitute hegemony. In Gramsci's terms, counter-hegemony depends on intellectual and moral reform: the transformation of the ideological terrain of the status quo and the creation of a new ideology, which serves as the unifying principle for a new collective will. This process of transformation involves a rearticulation of existing ideological elements. In other words, cultural struggle does not entail the complete rejection of the present system and all its elements, but rather a rearticulation of the system, rejecting only those elements which cannot serve to express the new situation (Mouffe, 1981: 230). The ‘new situation’ which is the source of inspiration for counter-hegemonic struggle, is a complex combination of diverse forms of resistance around a myriad of issues and identities, based on race, gender, sex, ethnicity, nationality, class and other groups or ideas around which

individuals form identities. Alliances shift and are often temporal, whether hegemonic or counter-hegemonic. Neither is ever totalizing or complete. Out of this incompleteness arises the idea of a dual-consciousness, indicative of Gramsci's belief that complete hegemony is never achieved and there is always basis for resistance. The subject thus possesses the basic consciousness with which to resist, the foundation on which counter-hegemonic struggle can be developed.

2.2.1 Conceptualizing hegemony in South Africa

Similarly to Italy at the time of Gramsci's writing, the system of domination in South Africa relied more heavily on rule (direct coercion) than on consent and there was no universal franchise, which meant that "the most important means of general consent-building (was) missing from the South African hegemonic armoury" (Tomaselli et. al. 1987: 16). However, class reductionist models of hegemony are not directly applicable to South Africa of the 1980s, especially given the manner in which race and nationality were important determinants of the social fabric. The history of white colonial rule in South Africa meant that even the politically dominant Afrikaners were involved in a struggle against the forces of British colonialism¹, including language preservation. British colonialism had, to some extent, legitimized the ideology and culture of Britain amongst black South Africans and English-speaking whites, whilst simultaneously undermining that of the Afrikaners. The subsequent Afrikaner nationalist struggle to free themselves from the political and cultural hegemony of English-speaking whites was integrally related to the institutionalization of apartheid that followed the rise to power of the Nationalist Party in 1948. Thus attempts to legitimize white Afrikaans culture were strongly resisted by African South Africans who tended to fall back on the earlier language and culture of domination – English – as a form of resisting Afrikaner Nationalism. Furthermore, the role of indigenous African languages and culture within the separate development policy of the Nationalist government complicated the preservation of these cultures within the struggle against apartheid.

¹Most strongly reflected in the Anglo-Boer Wars at the turn of the 20th Century.

Despite the rivalry between the two main white groups, they were drawn together in a joint domination over black South Africans. In their political domination they drew upon their common European cultural tradition – what Steve Biko referred to as an Anglo-Boer culture (Kavanagh, 1985: 18). Accordingly black South Africans were constructed as racial others to be dominated culturally (also economically and racially) through a combination of (particularly) force and winning and shaping consent as indicated above. At the same time the state attempted to indoctrinate both white Afrikaans and English citizens into a culture of nationalist Calvinist racism. Such indoctrination, often crude and oppressive in its implementation, inevitably led to some resistance within the ranks of white South Africans, indicating yet another instance in which hegemony was incomplete.

The complex and diverse nature of South African society in the 1980s necessitates the adoption of a nuanced conceptualization of hegemony and counter-hegemony. Kellner (1995b: 58) advocates an approach that “involves taking seriously struggles between men and women, feminists and anti-feminists, racists and antiracists, gays and antigays, and many other conflicts as well”. From this viewpoint, cultural struggle is heterogeneous and necessarily subsumes reductionist meta-narratives, which rely on binary oppositions in their conceptualization.

Yet cultural struggle must not be viewed in the opposite extreme, in purely individual, completely fragmented terms. Frantz Fanon (1961: 93), writing about the colonial situation in Algeria, importantly stresses that: “The settler’s work is to make even dreams of liberty impossible for the native. The native’s work is to imagine all possible methods for destroying the settler”. In reifying the distinction between subject and object, Fanon indicates the need to remember that in colonial contexts practices (such as censorship) exercised in the interests of hegemony involve a dominant group exercising power in their own interests at the expense of others. There were common forces of oppression, common strategies of exclusion, stereotyping and stigmatizing of oppressed groups, and thus common targets of attack. Commonalities as well as differences need to be stressed (Kellner, 1995b: 97). Yet the ensuing struggle was not one in which subject and object of power relations followed essentialist lines. As indicated in Chapter One, neither apartheid policy nor Nationalist rule was solely about asserting racial domination. Neither was

resistance to censorship during apartheid the sole domain of black South Africans. Overlapping interests shared by musicians of different races, genders, classes and other identities were constructed (either in terms of real practices or imagined through musical style or lyrics) within the dynamics of creating music and resisting injustices broadly and censorship specifically.

2.2.2 Instances of counter-hegemony

In arguing that the struggles around censorship of music in South Africa are best framed within a context of hegemonic and counter-hegemonic struggle, one final note of caution needs to be sounded. In using the idea of counter-hegemonic struggle, Eyerman and Jamison (1998: 164) refer to musicians as members of counter-hegemonic movements, referring to them as movement artists and intellectuals. However, in this thesis it is argued that a more independent position should be granted to musicians. In this argument it is maintained that musicians – intentionally or not – did sometimes involve themselves in instances of counter-hegemony which were moments of resistance to censorship, but that these instances themselves did not constitute membership of or strict allegiance to a unified counter-hegemonic movement. It is argued that to do so would romanticize and essentialize the part played by musicians as well as restrict their creativity to a mere instrumentalist role within a particular movement, whereas their actions were far more complex and intricate than such a reading of their actions implies. Furthermore, although the apartheid state was a centralized force involved in a hegemonic struggle, it would be fallacious to argue that there was only one social movement opposing it. The overwhelming struggle was against apartheid, with much opposition consolidated around the ANC/ UDF alliance. However there were other struggles waged by different movements and individuals during the same period. To consider one example, there was a war resistance movement opposed the South African Defence Force (SADF) and conscription. By 1980 Conscientious Objector Support Groups (COSG) had sprung up to support objectors. COSG raised national awareness about militarization and conscientious objection through public meetings and a national publication, *Objector* (CIIR, 1989:81). At the 4th national COSG conference in Durban in 1983 the End Conscription Campaign (ECC) was formed (CIIR, 1989:86). Resistance abroad was taken

up by the Committee on South African War Resistance (COSAWR), based in London and Amsterdam. ECC and COSAWR both focused on raising awareness and providing support for objectors. This broad anti-conscription movement took the fight to the SADF, putting pressure on the Nationalist government to end conscription and the SADF's activities both externally (especially in Angola and Namibia) and internally (in the townships in particular). There were also organizations and individuals who protested against the SADF and conscription who were not members of the ECC. While the SADF was undoubtedly part of the coercive arm of the state, maintaining the apartheid system, much of the resistance to the SADF was aimed at the SADF itself, by individuals opposed to the conformity of the SADF or who simply did not want to serve in the SADF for a variety of reasons not related to the SADF's role in supporting the apartheid system. Acting within the war resistance context these individuals (including musicians) were able to resist, and in this moment the hegemonic status of the SADF was challenged. These diffused occurrences of resistance are here regarded as instances of counter-hegemony.

The idea of *instances* of counter-hegemony is important. The term 'counter-hegemony' is used to situate some of the actions of musicians (in this instance those actions which attempt to bypass censorship) within a clearly political context. Not to realize the political significance of a musician attempting to obscure a contentious message would be to remove the song from an unavoidably political context. However, the error of placing too much emphasis on the political (especially linking the political to a political movement) also needs to be avoided if an accurate reflection of musicians' actions is to be achieved. Very few South African performers wrote on behalf of a movement. Most wrote independently of any political structures. Clearly there were times when such musicians contributed towards political campaigns when performing at political rallies or festivals, singing appropriate songs for the occasion. This emphasized the politicized nature of these musicians, but nevertheless did not reduce them to one-dimensional political beings, acting as organic movement intellectuals or artists. Rather, the performance of political songs as a means of being heard despite censorship, together with other means of outmanoeuvring censorship, were moments in which musicians' aesthetic reflections

combined with political and social convictions to create instances of counter-hegemony. In these moments the hegemonic status of the values of censors was being challenged.

The notion of individual counter-hegemonic instances follows Foucault's idea of fragmented resistance (see Garner, 1996: 60). As long as power relations do not solidify into a state of complete domination, resistance is possible. For Foucault (1976: 94), "power is exercised from innumerable points, in the interplay of nonegalitarian and mobile relations" in which individuals are simultaneously subjected to and exercise power. As such people are the vehicles of power, rather than its points of application (Foucault, 1994: 214). Power can thus be seen to be malleable and intricate, not confined to the state, legislature or class. In fact, it is omnipresent in the sense that "power is everywhere, not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere" (Foucault, 1976: 93). It follows that "there is no binary and all-encompassing opposition between rulers and ruled at the root of power relations, and serving as a general matrix" (Foucault, 1976: 94). While occasionally there might be massive binary oppositions,

"more often one is dealing with mobile and transitory points of resistance, producing cleavages in a society that shift about, fracturing unities and effecting regroupings, furrowing across individuals themselves, cutting them up and remolding them, marking off irreducible regions in them, in their bodies and minds. Just as the network of power relations ends by forming a dense web that passes through apparatuses and institutions, without being exactly localized in them, so too the swarm of points of resistance traverses social stratifications and individual unities" (Foucault, 1976: 96).

The situation in South Africa in the 1980s did tend towards one of mass resistance, but it nevertheless involved a heterogeneous ensemble of power relations located at different levels of society, manifested in localized struggles against the many forms of power exercised at the everyday level of social relations. The exercising of power and resistance to it was complex, and was certainly not centralized or fundamental, nor could all actions be seen to be exclusively complicit or resistant.

Foucault has been criticized for his pessimistic notion of power, in particular the idea of resistance to power never being in exteriority to it (see for instance, Best, 1997: 20-26; Sawicki, 1991: 223-224; Said, 1986). In transcending simple one-dimensional notions of

identity, Foucault exaggerates the shift from social wholes to focus “instead upon the individual as dissolved in an ineluctably advancing ‘microphysics of power’ that is hopeless to resist” (Said, 1993: 336). Nevertheless, the need to decentre the subject and to conceive of identities as heterogeneous remains an important exercise for understanding the dynamics of South Africa in the 1980s. Accordingly identities should be regarded as “points of temporary attachment to the subject positions which discursive practices construct for us” (Hall, 1996a: 6). Thus one’s locality and role can affect one’s allegiances and interests. As Jana Sawicki (1991: 224) puts it: “There are no privileged or fundamental coalitions in history, but rather a series of unstable and shifting ones”. A musician might have addressed different issues in different ways according to how s/he positioned him/herself at a particular time. S/he for example, might have taken on the role of (or identified with) the lover, conservationist, anti-racist, anti-sexist, or pacifist, but this did not necessarily exclude her/him from adopting an oppositional position in one instance and a different position in another.

Foucault argued that in reality power is an open, more-or-less co-ordinated cluster of relations, given that power relations are always fragmented, competing with each other and operating in different sites along different lines (Simons, 1995: 83). Individuals are ‘subjectified’ or bound to particular identities around which conflicts are fought (Foucault, 1982: 190) – for example, ethnic, racial, gender, national conflicts. However, individuals can potentially refuse to remain tied to the identities to which they are subjected, and assert multiple identities by struggling against the ways in which they are individualized (Foucault, 1982: 216). In South Africa the act of state censorship was an act of subjectification: classifying certain types of music and by implication, the musicians who created the music, as ‘undesirable’. For Foucault (1976: 85) the idea that the censor enforces silence schematizes power in a juridical form, its effects defined as obedience. Confronted by power in the form of a law, the subject is constituted as subject (is subjected) through the act of obeying. But in refusing to be subjected the individual is able to resist this power.

However, power both subjects and produces, thus seemingly clouding the issue of resistance, of refusing to be subjected. Individuals continue to accept power exercised over them because that power is both repressive and productive. Not only does power

exclude, repress, censor, abstract, mask and conceal, but it also produces reality, 'domains of objects' and 'rituals of truth' (Foucault, 1975:194). In this way productive power produces individuals. For example, disciplinary power exercised on the body increases the power of individuals but also makes them more docile (Sawicki, 1991: 221). When relating the positive notion of power to censorship in South Africa, it should be apparent that for many citizens censorship was productive in the sense that it was seen to rule out extreme ideas and forms of behaviour. As shown in Chapter Four, Christian and Muslim religious groups legitimized the government's censorship board by calling on it to ban pieces of music regarded as religiously offensive. When the board acted in favour of these groups, they regarded the censorship board as empowering them, even if through its very existence, it made them more docile. This reaction was mirrored in other instances of extended surveillance and policing, as in the example of the presence of 'troops in the townships'. The justification (supported by significant sectors of the population) for such surveillance/policing/control was always the public's interest, despite the increased encroachment of liberties and consequent escalating exercise of power over individuals which accompanied these actions. Importantly however, in South Africa, the exercising of such power over individuals was never widely accepted. Within the constraints of a highly repressive society it is difficult for disciplinary power to be seen as productive by those suffering the effects of oppression. For this reason, the scope for counter-hegemonic resistance in South Africa was always much stronger than Foucault and Bourdieu imagined for Western countries, where governments have invariably had greater degrees of legitimacy. Resistance in South Africa was therefore always potentially greater than simply registering individual acts of transgression against the dominant discourse. Resistance was always capable of achieving broader transformation. For this reason, even though there were multiple points of resistance in South Africa, a model which accepts the importance of a general struggle over hegemony is crucial to a society suffering massive inequalities.

The importance of eschewing dualisms has been clearly argued. It is imperative to avoid an approach which imagines cultural struggles to be dichotomous, yet there is also a need to be wary of individualizing subjects in isolation of collectivities. There are clearly differences (as opposed to dichotomies) as well as similarities. Conceptualizing struggles

over power in terms of both difference and similarity allows one to move forward with the idea of the individual who is able to act both individually and collectively. Sometimes slipping from one mode into the other, at other times overlapping or combining the roles. Such a position explains the South African context of mass resistance, yet also of shifting and unstable coalitions and allegiances.

2.3 Resisting censorship

This thesis is essentially concerned with struggles around structure. There was the struggle to set up, maintain and police state censorship structures. Censors (on censorship boards), those who supported them (moral and religious activists and members of political parties who supported censorship bills in Parliament), and those who enforced these laws (the police, Customs and Excise staff) implemented censorship. The structures of censorship were ostensibly put into place to empower the state but they also benefited other associations such as religious and moral institutions. There was also a reaction to the structure of censorship: the struggle to overcome, undermine, ignore, manipulate and bypass censorship structures.

2.3.1 Constraint and resistance

The struggle to resist censorship, to get the better of the censors, can be seen to stem directly from the structures put into place by censorship. Importantly, censorship rules came into play at two points. In the first instance the rules were established. The passing of the Publications Act Number 42 of 1974 established certain objective rules, as did the setting up of an SABC record committee with agreed zones of unacceptable lyrics (see Chapter Four). These rules created a relationship between censors and censorship subjects that bestowed certain causal powers on censors, which allowed the censors to dominate censorship subjects. In the second instance, the positions of censor and censorship subjects were "filled by actual incumbents" (Porpora, 1998: 352). The filling of these positions by actual censors, musicians and others involved in the field of censorship contributed a personal dynamic to the established rules. In Bourdieu's terms, those entering the censorship field interacted on the basis of cultural capital that they brought into the field. Crucially, the established rules did not rigidly specify the manner

in which the rules should be applied. The application of rules was dependent on the interaction of incumbents within the field. For one thing, the rules were open to interpretation and were not uniformly applied. This was especially true given that the bureaucratic nature of the censorship committees meant that the individual members of these committees, each with his/her own interpretation of the rules and approach to applying them, were to some extent interchangeable, allowing for various applications of the rules. Secondly, some of the interaction was not even governed by the established rules. For example, record company representatives who approached the head of the SABC record committee for approval of a song before pressing copies of a single. Such unregulated interactions can only be explained in terms of the record company representative's recognition of the causal powers inherent in the position of the head of the SABC record committee.

The recognition that constitutive rules establish relationships in the first place indicates that in the relationship between censors and those who are subject to censorship processes, three things need to be distinguished. For Douglas Porpora (1998: 352), these are: Firstly, "the original constitutive rules" that establish the particular relationship of authority and domination between censor and subjects of censorship process, secondly, the actual relationships themselves, and thirdly, "the tacit, informal rules that emerge when people enter those relationships and begin interacting" (Porpora, 1998: 352). This allows for a conceptualization of structure and resistance in which the structural properties of social systems constrain, enable and motivate (Porpora, 1998: 353). Unlike Anthony Giddens' (1982: 30-32) "duality of structure", Porpora's understanding of social structure introduces the crucial variable of motivation to the relationship between structure and resistance. Porpora (1998: 353) argues that:

"many systems ... never reproduce themselves exactly; they are ever changing as a result of the consequences of actors' actions. Consequently actors in those systems are routinely responding in nonroutine, nonrule-like ways to altered circumstances".

This model facilitates a conceptualization of individuals as being at least to some extent involved in their own regulation in ways not entirely determined by the structures themselves. Structural constraints therefore necessarily provide the possibility of



resistance in the very instance in which individuals encounter a framework of constraint such as censorship. Incorporating the personal motivation of actors, including for example the actors' interests, supports Bourdieu's position that "action is generated by the interaction of the opportunities and constraints of situations with actor dispositions – the repository of past experience, tradition, and habit" (Swartz, 1997: 291).

Censorial structures, although administered by concentrated groups of censors, operated at a fragmented and individual level throughout society. The principal sites of censorial regulation were the musicians themselves, as they made choices about their creative and musical output. Musicians' involvement in the process of regulation at a fundamental level enabled them to transgress and resist censorship structures. In the face of social structure, the constrained individual was able to respond differently, to refuse to be subjected in the ways intended by the censors, representing the dominant discourse. Social structures do not therefore necessarily bound individuals in predictable, intended ways. Neither, as has already been established, do structures only affect individuals negatively. Conversely, individuals require structure and order in order to act. On a fundamental level, it is through the constraints put into place during the process of socialization that we learn to become agents, able to act upon the world. The very process which creates out of individuals' docile bodies, also enables them, gives them language to express thoughts, moral frameworks within which to act, and so on. If we recall Butler's (1997: 132) argument (outlined in Chapter One), censorship produces speech. Censorship precedes speech, and for this reason is partly responsible for its production. We are raised to internalize the normative use of language to the extent that we police ourselves, sometimes deliberately, sometimes unconsciously. What the speaker or writer utters is formed and constituted by this normative use of language. The distinction between implicit and explicit censorship is partly one of degree, especially if explicit regulations that articulate constraints become implicit within a particular field over time.

The argument put forward here is that, just as individuals negotiate the constraints of implicit censorship in order to creatively produce everyday speech, they are able to negotiate the structures of explicit censorship. Explicit censorship can also precede speech in a productive manner. The demands of explicit censorship become internalized to the extent that they affect the utterances of the individual before and whilst they are

being formulated. For Butler (1997: 132), the productiveness of censorship does not mean that it is positive or beneficial. Rather, censorship is formative of subjects and the legitimate boundaries of speech; it is not solely based on external exertion of control or as the deprivation of liberties. Thus censorship is not simply a form of moral instruction which the state bestows upon its citizens, but operates on a more fundamental level, labelling certain citizens as desirable and others as undesirable. Censorship is therefore not primarily about speech, but is exercised in the interests of deeper social and state goals. Its productive capacity is in developing certain types of subjects rather than others, or in achieving consensus.

Censorship can be seen to be productive because of the resistance to which it gives rise. 'Productive' here would be seen in a beneficial sense. Certainly, Lev Loseff (1984: 11) in his book 'On the Beneficence of Censorship' has put forward the seemingly paradoxical argument that censorship has long been a part of the creative process in Russian literature. This is largely due to the pressure which censorship puts on the author to develop what he refers to as an 'Aesopian' manner of metaphorical and symbolic writing. The Aesopian approach develops the work's aesthetic value and heightens the involvement of the reader in the psychological scheme. He quotes poet Joseph Brodsky as saying that censorship is useful to literature because it "is unwittingly an impetus to metaphorical language" (in Loseff, 1984: 12). Herten (in Loseff, 1984: 11) concludes that "censorship is highly conducive to progress in the mastery of style and in the ability to restrain one's words... In allegorical discourse there is perceptible excitement and struggle: this discourse is more impassioned than any straight exposition". For Herzen, an utterance that has been checked has greater meaning concentrated in it and has a sharper edge because hidden meanings increase the power of language, although it cannot be assumed that the reader/listener necessarily infers such meanings. The powerful effect of implied meaning is potentially enhanced when the utterance is made musically. Roland Barthes (1991: 285) argues that perhaps the value of music is its metaphoric power, its ability to symbolize things unknowable by ordinary cognitive or logical means. Certainly, Simon Frith (1996a: 166) asserts that songs are modes of expression. Music provides an emotional context which accentuates the persuasive relationship between singer/musician

and the listener. Rhythm, melody and harmony combine to empower lyrical messages in a manner not available to other forms of text.

While the power referred to here develops out of the aesthetic value of the writing/music, it is nevertheless a form of power which develops out of resistance to censorship. It is often because of censorship that the writer uses Aesopian muses to put across a dissenting message, to overcome censorship. In a well-known quote, Foucault (1976: 95) has said that where there is power there is resistance, meaning that when someone affects someone contrary to that person's interests, the person so affected will resist that power which has been exercised over him/her. However, it is further argued here that if the resistance is successful, then it too becomes powerful (affecting the original executor of power contrary to his/her wishes). Hence the power ebbs and flows – where power is exercised and is successfully resisted there is an exchange in the exercise of power. This would seem to be especially true in situations where resistance contributes towards significant change or (as in this study) successfully overcomes censorship (where someone says what they want to go against the wishes of others), and is not restricted to mere gestures of transgression.

It seems apparent therefore, that where there is structure there is the possibility of resistance: resistance to that structure. In both the setting up and maintenance of structure and in the resistance to that structure, power is exercised. And in both instances the power is resisted, from hegemonic and counter-hegemonic positions. The contest over censorship can thus be seen to be one of a spiralling 'wrangle' between the censors and censored in a struggle for position in a cultural-political field. The one reacts to the other, and the reaction in return evokes a response from the former and so on, both censors and censored attempt to outmanoeuvre the other. In so doing they attempt to reposition themselves, in the hope that they might find a niche in which power can be exercised so that it exemplifies the autonomy of the individual, very often outside of a strict for/against framework of binary struggle. The struggle between censor and musician is captured in Bourdieu's (1998) analysis of the opposition between "curators of culture" and "creators of culture" in intellectual fields. The censors, as curators of culture, rely on conservation strategies to reproduce and transmit the dominating discourse while resistant musicians, as creators of culture, devise subversive strategies in an attempt to

successfully transmit an alternative discourse. Importantly, “the two opposing strategies within the field are dialectically related; one generates the other. Orthodoxies call into existence their heterodox reversals by the logic of distinction that operates in cultural fields. Challengers oblige the old guard to mount a defense of its privileges; that defense, then, becomes grounds for subversion” (Swartz, 1997: 124). The defence is undertaken through a range of strategies aimed at silencing subversive musicians, but these are always predictable. Varied and creative opportunities for resistance develop out of these strategies. The expectations implicit in the resistant censored musician’s habitus come into conflict with the dominant discourse of the cultural (and broader) field(s). Out of this conflict develops the potential for successful challenges and change.

2.3.2 Creating spaces within which to resist censorship

Indeed, resistance is certain because hegemony can never be complete. Individuals involved in the music context in South Africa in the 1980s were constantly able to work towards finding spaces within which they could resist censorship. Raymond Williams (1979: 252) emphasized that:

“however dominant a social system may be, the very meaning of its domination involves a limitation or selection of the activities it covers, so that by definition it cannot exhaust all social experience, which therefore always potentially contains space for alternative acts and alternative intentions which are not yet articulated as a social institution or even project”.

As the discussion of resistance to censorship (in Chapters Seven and Eight) indicates, musicians, record companies and others involved in the South African music context engaged in diverse forms of resistance to censorship. Some initiatives, such as crossover music and exploring ‘other’ ethnic identities on stage, successfully subverted censorship, by articulating a vision of South African multiculturalism later to be identified with a rainbow culture, which developed in the 1990s, particularly after the formal transition to democracy in April 1994.

Importantly, the way in which musicians envisaged future developments emphasizes the need to develop a view of resistance which goes beyond simply resisting the power relations underlying censorship practices. As discussed in Chapters Four and Five in

particular, censorship was not only about the freedom of speech, but severely affected musicians' ability to make a living from their music while remaining true to their political and aesthetic convictions. Resisting censorship was thus not only indicating one's disapproval of the dominant discourse or refusal to submit to authoritarian dictates. It was also about transforming society, about altering power relations within society to put an end to the injustices and/or restrictions which censorship attempted to defend. Street (1997: 179-180) argues that censorship forms "part of a larger process of reshaping the political landscape, organizing some interests and marginalizing other ones". Censors' attacks on popular culture indeed indicated the ability of culture to embody an alternative order. A cursory examination of music censored by the Directorate of Publications and the SABC during the 1980s indicates that various censors (and those calling for censorship) feared such an alternative order: one where political murders would not be acceptable, Nelson Mandela would walk free, inter-cultural mixing and living would be normal, sexuality could be explored, the government could be criticized, international standards of human rights would set local standards and critical discussion of religion would be allowed. These were some of the ideas that were regularly censored during that time. Censorship marks the boundaries between what is acceptable and what is not. It is about everyday living, what one can and cannot do, what one can and cannot dream of and work towards. Resistance to censorship thus went beyond a simple refusal to submit to censorship rules, but incorporated a broader desire to transform society, to exist within an alternative order, redefine the boundaries of normal society.

To do this, musicians sometimes worked together with other musicians (beyond those belonging to their immediate group or backing band), within the context of political organization and broader political movements or individually depending on personal and broader circumstances. They often "repositioned themselves differently" (Hall in Grossberg 1996: 138) in order to foster new ways of conceiving cultural practice, outmanoeuvring censors' attempts to restrict them in the process. Eyerman and Jamison (1998: 164) have usefully conceived this repositioning as musicians taking up the role of Gramsci's organic intellectuals. As such musicians – whether working in close collaboration with a social movement or not – develop a political awareness which they voice through their music, in the performance of their music and in their struggles to get

their music heard. As previously noted, Eyerman and Jamison place greater emphasis on musicians' positions within social movements than is often warranted. A freer conceptualization of the musician as agent is needed. Eyerman and Jamison (1998: 164-5) are correct in arguing that social movements are the contexts of social change. They argue that musicians acting as "activist-performers" creatively combine culture and politics to produce social change. They argue that within movement space musicians (including song-writers) are able to uncover a new dimension of their work and a new identity for themselves and their music. Ultimately these activist-performers assist in constituting the "cognitive praxis of social movements" by giving voice to the movement, creating the possibility of transforming the hegemonic culture. Social movements offer musicians opportunities within which to explore counter-hegemonic ideals. Within this context the musician "can become a political as well as a cultural agent, and thus help shape an emergent cultural formation" (Eyerman and Jamison, 1998: 165).

Framing the musician within a social movement context in this way effectively underscores the potential for resistance in the struggle against censorship – the struggle to be heard. The problem with this perception of musicians, though, has to do with the relationship between musicians and the social movements of their time. Many musicians who had to overcome censorship did not do so because they were overtly politically motivated. For example they might have been trying wholeheartedly to devise ways of simply (and safely) making a living out of their music. This is not to say that the struggle around censorship in which they were engaged was not political. Indeed it was. But certain musicians were not themselves politically motivated. For example, a singer whose song was banned because of sexually explicit lyrics was engaged in a struggle over sexual politics, and in this instance state censorship was clearly motivated by a desire to uphold certain dominant (probably Calvinist) views about sexuality. Yet the musician might have been completely apolitical in other areas. Certainly many musicians did locate their music within the context of social movements – whether these were feminist, anti-apartheid, socialist, anti-conscription, general human rights or even Christian movements (see Chapter Seven). However, these musicians were not necessarily members of political or other movements, or in any specific way related to a social

movement. Their stance might simply have shared certain sentiments with particular movement ideas and beliefs.

Musicians repositioned themselves to identify with such sentiments, often temporarily. As Stuart Hall (1996a: 4) has argued:

“identities are about questions of using resources of history, language and culture in the process of becoming, rather than being: not ‘who we are’ or ‘where we came from’, so much as what we might become, how we have been represented and how that bears on how we might represent ourselves”.

It has already been noted that individuals do not possess static one-dimensional identities. Even in South Africa of the 1980s multiple identities could be constructed. Resistance certainly was not one-dimensional. Musicians actively explored their multiple identities via their music on an ongoing basis. These identities were points of temporary attachment, not fixed in a single point, but located in varying spaces within which musicians situated themselves. Thus Karen Press (1990: 44) argues that even politicized musicians wrote lyrics about their own experiences and desires, in which they explored “the possibilities of aesthetic forms, the ability to identify ways of depicting social experience that offer new images, new meanings for that experience, which characterize the creative skills of the artist”.

In relation to censorship this emphasizes the argument that structures of censorship created constraints which were at the same time enabling and consequently allowed for the personal motivation of musicians to develop instances of counter-hegemony. Censorship was a challenge to musicians wanting to be aesthetically creative, honest in their exploration of meaningful themes and who nevertheless wanted to be heard. Yet musicians were not powerless in this situation. Neither did their resistance simply constitute rebellion as an end in itself, but sometimes could represent a transformative counter-hegemonic standpoint. It had the potential to represent a different way of being.

2.4 Conclusion

The most intricate part of placing this struggle in a theoretical context is in locating censors (to some extent) and musicians (to a greater extent) as individuals within a context of counter-hegemony, as multi-dimensional and changing individuals, often acting from points of temporary attachment. It has been argued that all acts of censorship and dealing with censorship were political and that some musicians approached the issue of censorship from an overtly conscious political angle, feeding off the sentiments of politically or morally charged social movements. Nevertheless, it would be incorrect to limit musicians to the role of movement intellectuals, acting on behalf of or representative of a social movement. This may have been true of some musicians, but certainly not of many.

In this chapter it has been argued that struggles around the censorship of music need to take into consideration the many nuanced positions from which a large variety of musicians tackled censorship or simply lived with it. The argument has been towards locating musicians and censors outside of one-dimensional identities, accounting for their fluid and divergent locations within power relations and processes of identification. South African musicians during the 1980s adopted a myriad of identities based on race, gender, rural/urban/quasi-rural background, generation differences, class and education, which were reflected in each musician in a complex manner, in a multitude of ways. Musicians constructed their identities in order to project themselves as performers in particular ways. Musicians certainly positioned themselves according to strategies which encompassed their creative, professional, social and personal convictions. None of these categories remained fixed.

Also, those calling for and implementing censorship were not simple caricatures of complicity. Such a view would not allow for resistance of any kind within the ranks of the censors. As the discussion in Chapters Four reveals, such resistance did occur. The struggle around censorship was indeed complex.

Importantly, struggles around censorship involved power relations where the censors' initial exercise of power subjected musicians and the majority of society to an attempted silencing of musical messages. But structure does not only curtail people, it also enables them, not only in regulating them in constructive ways, but in forming barriers against

which resistance can be mounted. Out of this structural dynamic developed the censored individual's ability to create spaces from which to resist. These spaces represented counter-hegemonic expressions forbidden by those in the powerful positions who decided what constituted desirable and undesirable pieces of music. In Chapters Four to Eight these struggles over the censorship of popular music are documented and analysed in detail. As will be shown, musicians were indeed capable of resisting attempts to silence their voices and expressions.

CHAPTER THREE

Researching the censorship of popular music in 1980s South Africa

Whose being doing what
For who and when for less and whose
Been left out there with
Dust on his feet
Shot down in the streets

(“Shot Down” (1985) – Cherry Faced Lurchers)

3.1 Introduction

This study focuses on the manner in which the terrain of popular music was acted upon and manipulated by a plurality of contesting forces. In setting about this study five general inter-related goals have been outlined. Firstly, to investigate and document attempts by various groups to support hegemonic and counter-hegemonic forms of censorship. Secondly, to explore strategies employed by South African musicians in successfully making themselves heard despite attempts to silence them. Thirdly, to examine the reasons underlying the different forms of censorship (as documented in the study). Fourthly, to analyse the meanings which South African musicians attached to their position as creative performers within the social, political and economic dynamics of the music industry at the time, including their experience of various forms of censorship and related repressive interventions. Fifthly, to locate the analysis of the censorship of popular music in South Africa within contemporary theoretical context as outlined in the previous chapter.

In pursuing these aims a strategy of data collection triangulation (Denzin, 1970) was adopted. This allowed for an account of censorship which is documented as well as possible. In the ensuing discussion an epistemological and methodological account is set out to provide an informed context of the research.

3.2 Researching and representing the subject

I met musician Tsepo Tshola at his Klerksdorp home one September Sunday morning in 1998. He invited me into his lounge where we sat down in preparation for my interview

with him, as previously arranged. He had not had a good night because of a bad case of toothache. Yet he insisted on going ahead with the interview because he thought it was an important topic. Tshola is passionate about his music and has strong views about the responsibility of musicians to promote local cultural heritage in the face of influences which undermine what he refers to as traditional culture. During the interview Tshola (Interview, 1998) directed his argument about social responsibility at me. He made the point that:

I'd like you in your book to look more deeper into yourselves, you people who write books because you do research. You go around, you ask us questions, but nobody is questioning you. Why are you doing this? Do you think you are doing the right thing? Are you going to be telling the truth? Or do you just want a thesis that will make you pass your masters? Then you say: 'Wow, I've done it!' And the next thing the book sells millions. Do I get anything out of it? Nothing. Do I sign any contracts about that? Nothing. Have I given you enough information? Yes. I've given you enough information. Have I given you my interview from the bottom of my heart? I have given it to you! What comes back in return? Nothing. So basically we are all to blame. We are exploiting each other's minds.

Although some aspects of Tshola's point are overstated, he questioned my accountability as a researcher to the musicians I interview and, importantly, to the history of South African music in terms of how I use my research to strengthen the South African musical heritage. This sort of challenge is an essential reminder to researchers of their responsibility to interviewees: not simply to treat them as sources of information, but as interested participants with a vested interest in the research findings.

Tshola's comments about accountability and truth also relate to issues of the representation of subjects in the research process. It has already been argued (in Chapter One), that racial, class, sex and gender identity were crucial variables constituting South African musicians' identities and affecting their lives in the 1980s. Although popular musicians shared a common bond in being artists, sharing at least some aspects that performing music entailed, they did not constitute a homogenous group. Given this lack of homogeneity, two important questions need to be considered, both to do with representation. Firstly, how best to conceptualize musicians? Secondly, does my status as

a white English-speaking male affect issues of research and representation? If it does, then how best is this accounted for in the research and writing process?

On the first question, how best to conceptualize the musicians being studied, it is important to begin by noting that during the 1980s South Africa was a place of multiple identities. Given these "complex figurations" at the level of identity (Nuttall and Michael, 2000: 1), there is a need to account for the social context of musicians. It would be problematic to speak about white and black musicians as similarly positioned vis-à-vis the state and other institutions in apartheid South Africa. An analysis that ignores class and sex would be similarly flawed. These social variables affected musicians' experience of growing up in South Africa, their journeys into and experience of musicianship, and their approach to censorship based on the likely consequences of their possible actions. For example, there were severe economic implications for poor musicians doing anything to jeopardize record sales. Race affected the possible penalties musicians faced when risking performances in particular places at certain times, such as negotiating roadblocks and dealing with pass law restrictions. Given the pervasiveness of certain social variables in the lives of South African musicians, these cannot and indeed have not been ignored in this thesis.

However, although difference is noted, it is not essentialized. Cheryl De La Rey (1997: 6) argues that how we experience the world and others' responses to us are "inextricably tied" to various "axes of difference" such as race, gender, class and sexual preference. An awareness of these "axes of difference" has led many social scientists to reject essentialism based on supposedly core differences such as gender and race. Indeed, Trinh Minh-ha (1997: 418) refuses to "naturalize the I" rejecting the idea of the "essential core" as a myth. After all, she argues, "where should the dividing line between outsider and insider stop? How should it be defined? By skin color, by language, by geography, by nation, by political affinity?" In any case, each of these positions is an imprecise, constructed hybrid, and not what it might initially appear to be. Louise Meintjes (2003: 110) exemplifies the shifting nature of social variables in her study of the making of an mbaqanga album in a Johannesburg studio. She explores how race, citizenship and ethnicity are figured in an mbaqanga album through Africanness, South Africanness and Zuluness respectively. These elements are collectively constructed to form an

“essentialized other” to white (apartheid), Western and cosmopolitan expectations. Notions of core, naturalized identities are thus regarded as tropes of authenticity, “used by social actors in specific local situations to erect boundaries, to maintain distinctions between us and them” (Stokes, 1994: 6).

Certainly, the reification of difference as promulgated by the apartheid system was intended to construct barriers based on naturalized identities. Although it is recognized that variables of difference are tropes used to construct separateness, this does mean that the differences are mythical or inconsequential. Rather, it is argued here that relative contexts give rise to different experiences and meanings which should not be regarded as fixed, rigid or essential. Indeed, some South African musicians were involved in a level of ethnic re-positioning by exploring musical styles outside of their own ethnic background: whether white members of Juluka, Mango Groove and Hotline incorporating elements of musical styles traditionally associated with South African ethnic styles or black musicians such as Steve Kekana, Babsy Mlangeni and members of Harari adopting Western pop and disco styles of music and singing in English. When confronting decisions about how to achieve success and whether or not to make political statements, many of these musicians were confronted with similar constraints yet, at the same time, experienced them differently according to each one’s specific identity make-up.

In summing up this first point, it is not claimed that all musicians went through the same experiences or responded to threats of censorship in the same way. On the contrary, the varying contexts of different musicians are noted, and both structure and resistance are contextualized according to the complexities of South African life.

The second question, that of the effect of my identity vis-à-vis my position as researcher, author and main voice of this thesis, follows from the preceding discussion. The issues of who may do research on whom and who may represent whom remains a point of contention, involving consideration of interests and power relationships. Hall (1992: 295) summarized the debate by acknowledging that ways of talking about, thinking about or representing a particular subject or topic “always operate in relation to power – they are part of the way power circulates and is contested”. The issue of identity and representation is particularly problematic if the researcher/author constructs a view of the world based on an essentialist framework or in ways disempowering to those being

researched and written about (see Said, 1993; 1995 and Spivak, 1995). Based on arguments about interpretative authority in maintaining racial domination, feminist theorists like Dabi Nkululeko (1987) and Desirée Lewis (1993) have gone as far as to argue that white women, in the process of researching black women, entrench racist oppositions. De La Rey (1997: 7) and Allen (2000: 12) have argued that this argument is based on the assumption of an essential identity shared by the insider researcher and the researched. Conversely, an outsider researcher is assumed to represent an essential 'other' identity not compatible with that of the researched. In agreement with the likes of Robert Merton (1972), Trinh Minh-ha (1987) and Lila Abu-Lughod (1990) Allen rejects essentialist notions of identity for their "ghettoising effect" (Allen, 2000: 13) and opts for a more nuanced approach which problematizes research methodology and theory but does not curtail enquiry by reserving research areas for particular interest groups (Allen, 2000: 31). Partly based^p on the opinions of black women musicians she interviewed, Allen (who is white) concludes that essentialism is reliant on three untenable assumptions. These have to do with giving preference to one particular identity variable in the research process, assuming that people of different identity groups have little in common, and assuming that shared identity is a crucial criteria in providing authority and ability to carry out research (Allen, 2000: 29).

Following from the preceding discussion of multiple identities, it is argued that any interview situation involves the interaction of two individuals with multiple identities, not rigid representatives of particular identity groups (see also Allen, 2000: 29). Crucially (as set out in the rest of this chapter), the research process adopted was designed, as far as possible, to create interview contexts which encouraged the sharing of experiences and knowledge on a non-discriminatory level, acknowledging the personal experience and subjectivity of the interviewee in every situation.

However, there is one particular exception. My status as an English-speaking South African limited the choice of languages in which the interviews could take place. This meant that interviews with musicians whose first language was not English nevertheless had to be carried out in English. At no point was this raised as an issue by any of the musicians, most of whom were used to being interviewed by the English press, and seemed to regard my interview with them in a similar light. Nevertheless I did regret my

monolingualism (although with an ability to partially understand, but not fluently converse in Afrikaans). However, Lara Allen, who was similarly handicapped in her research, did salvage an important advantage in interviews being conducted in English. She argued that it avoids the problem of re-presenting the musician's discussion into English at a later stage, and running the risk of mistranslation (Allen, 2000: 25). However, it is acknowledged that there is a drawback that those not fluent in English might not always have been able to convey nuances of meaning. Importantly, the interview process allowed for the opportunity for clarification if a question asked or a point made was not clear. By the end of each interview a clear representation, in English, was recorded onto cassette tape and later transcribed, preserved for accurate reference in the later processes of writing-up and analysis.

3.3 The adoption of a qualitative approach

Frank Bechhofer and Lindsay Paterson (2000: vii) have argued that research design involves choosing "a set of procedures which enable your aims and objectives to be realised in practice". Bearing in mind the aforementioned aims, a qualitative approach was adopted. No attempt has been made to quantify the extent to which musicians were affected by censorship or the extent to which any form of resistance was practised (for example, making claims about what percentage of musicians practised self-censorship or camouflaged lyrics). For this reason, the central quantitative research method, the survey, comprising questions to be coded and quantified, was not deemed suitable to this study. The emphasis has been on the practice of particular strategies, even if just by one musician. The interest and significance of each strategy lies in its potential to outmanoeuvre the censors. This relies on the intricacies and innovativeness of each strategy rather than on the degree to which it was practised. The thesis has been concerned with the underlying reasons for various strategies being adopted, what musicians hoped to achieve, and what their experiences were.

Consequently strategic informants from a number of areas related to the research were selected, instead of applying a general questionnaire to a sampled group deemed representative of the general population. Strategic informants, who are prominent people within principle areas of the research, were selected on the assumption that knowledge of

the subject area is unevenly distributed amongst those who were involved in the South African popular music context of the 1980s. The interviewees were chosen on the assumption that they were most likely to assist with the different areas of the research (Smith, 1981: 278).

An initial list of interviewees was drawn up on the basis of their position in relation to the South African music context in the 1980s. In a variation of the snowball technique I asked the initial interviewees to supply the names of other people (who might be able to provide new/and or more detailed information) within their own network of contacts. Sometimes a name of a musician would come up within an interview or the interviewee, on reflection, might name a particular person who was involved in a certain event or who did something in a particular way. Given that the initial interviewees were situated in different areas of the research area, a single "chain of informants" (Burgess, 1982: 55) within a particular area or musical genre was avoided.

The total number of people interviewed was partly dependent on available time and resources, but the process was not complete until the initial strategic informants and their recommended contacts were – as far as possible – interviewed. The final number interviewed was determined primarily by the information acquired, ensuring that as few gaps as possible existed in corroborated information. 77 people were interviewed (and one person completed an open-ended questionnaire), covering all the important areas of the research. There were some people who I initially wanted to interview, but was unable to. These included people who could not be traced, were living outside the country, did not return calls, did not want to be interviewed or who were too busy to be interviewed. There were even some musicians who would only be interviewed for a fee. I did not interview them. Unfortunately Simon Nkabinde (Mahlatini) was too sick to meet with me at the arranged time (and he sadly died from his illness) while Mzwakhe Mbuli was in prison, but very kindly replied to an open-ended questionnaire in nine pages of handwritten response. In all instances when initially intended interviewees were not interviewed similarly positioned alternatives were found to take their place.

3.3.1 Reflecting the subjects' voices

Importantly, the research aimed to uncover not just the procedures, strategies and measures adopted by social actors, but also the understanding and perception (in general the *experience*) of those involved in the research process so as to “penetrate the frames of meaning with which they operate(d)” (Bryman, 1998: 61). For this reason the voices of those involved in the censorship process have been of central interest. These voices are particularly important because of the tales they tell about those times: their experience of censoring, of being censored, of practising self-censorship, and of attempting to find spaces within which to be creative despite censorship.

However, the voices of musicians appear in this thesis as selective quotes. Thus musicians speak for themselves only so far as their experiences substantiate claims I make about forms of censorship and resistance to that censorship. In other words, the interviewees are not allowed to speak for themselves without any editorializing. Meintjies (2003: 15) acknowledges that:

“Transcriptions have long been upheld as the authorial material of ethnographic research for their seeming transparency. Yet the recording of an event and its subsequent transcription, translation, editing and final representation in analysis involves multiple steps of mediation and forms of interpretation”.

Certainly the words quoted are at my discretion, so that in a sense I can be seen to have played the role of a producer in a recording studio, recording more than is needed and later drawing out the parts that make the narrative fit together. In a sense I have weaved together the relevant quotes, choosing those which best capture the topic under discussion. The narrative which is presented, though, is at least depicted through the interviewees' own words, often capturing a mood, an atmosphere, a personality, not otherwise possible. This is regarded as a crucial product of the qualitative approach adopted in this thesis.

3.3.2 In-depth interviews

Given the exploratory nature of the proposed study, especially in accessing the point of view and frame of reference of the informants, the core method used in gathering data was the ethnographic interview. Harvey and MacDonald (1993: 199) note that this form

of interview attempts to uncover the meanings that informants construct about aspects of their social world. The specific form of ethnographic interview used was the in-depth focused interview which provides "the opportunity for the researcher to probe deeply, to uncover new clues, to open new dimensions of a problem and to secure vivid, accurate, inclusive accounts that are based on personal experience" (Burgess cited in Walker, 1985: 4). The focused interview allowed the interviewee to talk about his/her involvement in the research subject area in terms of his/her frames of reference. Tim May (1993: 94) notes this facilitates an understanding of the meanings and interpretations that individuals attribute to events and relationships while also providing a greater understanding of the interviewee's point of view. The interview process also enabled me to meet the musicians I was studying, and to establish valuable, more personal contacts with them. In some instances this allowed me to access their archival records, providing an important means of corroboration. Furthermore, if during the process of transcribing, reading through transcribed interviews or writing up chapters, I picked up issues which needed substantiation, the established contact with musicians made it easy to go back to them (usually by means of a phone call or via e-mail) to clarify the issue.

Although one of the advantages of the interview process (as opposed to questionnaires) is a higher response rate, a disadvantage is that usually the breadth of the study suffers because of the lack of resources to conduct broad-based interviews. This I attempted to alleviate by choosing strategic informants from each area and then interviewing people from that area until that area seemed to have been adequately researched (little or no new information was being gained and little corroboration was needed to back up existing research). This meant doing a lot of interviews and weeks of transcribing, but it has provided both breadth and depth to the research.

3.3.3 Engagement in the interview process

The approach to carrying out interviews with which I was most comfortable did not follow traditional textbook prescriptions that are almost exploitative in the one-way process through which information is extracted from the interviewee. Perhaps given the easy-going nature of many musicians and the genuine interest most of them have in the music industry (archiving and preserving the musical past), the relationship which

developed when I met with musicians was often one of mutual interest. They were interested in what I was doing and asked me questions about my work. As in Ann Oakley's (1979) research on women's transition into motherhood, disengagement was not an acceptable or useful stance to adopt in this research.

In reflecting on her research, Oakley (1979: 309-317; 1992: 14-17) argued that not answering questions posed by the interviewee was not conducive to establishing rapport. For her, a refusal to answer questions (in her case these had to do with concerned mothers-to-be asking about the dangers of epidurals and the like) or to provide evasive answers breaks down rapport. May (1993: 103) argues that "(t)o expect someone to reveal important and personal information without entering into a dialogue is untenable. For this reason engagement, not disengagement, is a valued aspect of feminist research". However, it would be mistaken to view engagement of this type as a solely feminist enterprise. The atmosphere that exists within the generally marginalized South African music context is one in which even now musicians are involved in a struggle to have their stories, as well as their music, heard. Musicians who were part of the 1980s music context do not want their music to be forgotten and many are still attempting to come to terms with their musical past. Having participated in a music context subject to censorship and shrouded in secrecy, musicians often asked me about my research findings. They have been interested – if not fascinated – to hear that I have found archival evidence dealing with the censorship of their music. Lee Edwards, Sipho Mabuse, Roger Lucey, David Marks and Jonathan Handley all expressed an interest in archival evidence about censorship of their music and I posted copies of archival documents to them. Other musicians have borrowed music and video footage or have asked me for assistance in tracking down material. In all of these instances the least I could do was reciprocate in what has turned out to be a collaborative project, so that in some ways this thesis represents many individual efforts to come to terms with the past. This has been an important means of giving something back to musicians, of replying to Tsepo Tshola's critique of researchers who merely exploit interviewees for their own gain.

3.3.4. Corroborating the remembered past

The importance of data triangulation is fully revealed when corroboration of information provided in the interview process was required. In the interviews musicians would sometimes make claims, remember events or state things as categorically true which were incorrect. This is a common problem. For example, Irwin Stambler (1974: ii) warns that:

“Artists and even expert observers often disagree or even change past history either on purpose, because the past doesn’t fit a current image or involves material the performer feels is below his later creative achievements, or, as is more usually the case, accidentally, because of the frailty of human memory”.

For Allen (2000: 36) popular musicians are “constantly involved in identity fabrication and myth making, for they need always to be conscious of their image and the possible professional repercussions of certain kinds of publicity”. This could result in omitting or downplaying certain information or over-emphasizing and even making up data. This was certainly Meintjes’ (2000: 33) experience in her interviews with musicians and producers in the early 1990s. She was confronted with many instances of “obfuscation, omissions, and chronological elisions” by music-makers who mobilized “the past and the imagined in their narratives to serve the present”. She cites examples of a producer who claims to have used a particular type of studio equipment when in fact he had not, and another who claimed to have received platinum awards at a time when platinum awards had not yet been introduced. Meintjes (2003: 33-34) views these “trickstering discursive moves” as part of a process of cultivating the interviewee’s enigma, keeping themselves unknowable, constantly slipping out of the frame. Certainly, “moving through these zones of ambiguity” (Meintjes, 2003: 66) was a useful and necessary ploy during the apartheid era when the presence of a white woman in a vehicle of otherwise black musicians was best explained by saying that she was the group’s manager. It is important here, however, to check all claims where possible based on a critical realist understanding which insists on the reality of events and discourses (Bhaskar, 1989: 2). Triangulation was the key strategy here, although at times an attempt to clarify issues took place in the interview itself.

If a factual irregularity or implausibility was picked up in the interview it was usually dealt with immediately. For example, when Gary Rathbone claimed that Wendy Oldfield

had participated in the Bureau for Information song I informed him that she had not. Sometimes I did not realise the fabrication until after the interview, when corroborating information from other sources. For example, Anton Goosen told me that one of his songs had been 'Gazetted' (meaning banned by the Directorate of Publications and reported in the Government Gazette), but I later found this not to have been the case. These sorts of incidents made me ever more cautious of the information provided by interviewees. For whatever reason, interviewees occasionally remembered things incorrectly or falsified information, deliberately or by mistake and sometimes even for effect. Take for example the following statement made by musician Alistair Coakley (Interview, 1998):

We had certain songs that we used to internally vet as well, the lyrics of, because we knew that if it went to radio they would have been bombed out the water, so we were very careful how far lyrically we pushed the stuff out... So as much as we had a social conscience, none of us fancied a long stay at Vlakplaas, being braaied or something like that because that was a reality at that stage.

Two incidents to which Coakley refers – being taken to Vlakplaas (a security branch 'dirty tricks' task force base) and being braaied (barbecued) by the police – only became known to the general South African public as a result of the Truth and Reconciliation Process during the mid-to-late 1990s. Coakley thus remembered long past fears in terms of more recent information. Clearly he used 'Vlakplaas' and 'being braaied' metaphorically to symbolize his fears about the possible consequences of being overtly political. However, the metaphors he used were not available to him at the time of the events he describes. Thus his memories have been coloured by subsequent events which make it difficult to know what he actually felt at the time. What was it, precisely, that he feared? Clearly not being sent to Vlakplaas and being braaied. Perhaps he feared detention. Or was it having his music banned by the SABC? This issue may seem of little importance given that the main point is clear: what he does know is that he wanted to do more but was afraid of doing so. Yet it does illustrate the way in which memories are not always clear and accurate.

The researcher also needs to be aware that it can be in the interviewee's interests to sensationalize his/her past. Musicians for example, might claim to have had their songs

banned when they were not, to give themselves political credibility. Norman Denzin (1970: 244) tackles the issues raised here as one of internal validity. He argues that:

“Given the stage any person has reached in a career, one typically finds that he (sic) constructs an image of his life course – past, present and future – which selects, abstracts and distorts in such a way as to provide him with a view of himself that he can usefully expound in current situations”.

The possibility that subjects might manipulate the retellings of their past in this way emphasizes the importance of corroboration of data in the research process. Denzin argues that the subjectivity of the interviewee is itself important (even if the objectivity of the recalled event is in doubt) given that the perceptions of the person are fundamental in interpretative research. However in this research an important emphasis has been placed on uncovering what happened to musicians and what they did in response. To this end the accuracy of many details needs to be confirmed. Denzin (1970: 245) therefore argues that “as many different perspectives as possible must be brought to bear upon [each] specific event and situation”. This form of methodological triangulation combines two or more different research strategies in studying the same subject matter (Denzin, 1970: 308) In this study the different research strategies adopted were the in-depth interview, archival research in the form of a broad array of documentary research and an analysis of recorded music related to the study.

To illustrate this, an initial literature and music review informed some of the interview questions. The interviews were thus in part an attempt to corroborate some of the information previously drawn together and also an attempt to gain new information and insights. This multi-method approach was taken further by asking interviewees for any archival evidence they might have to support their claims or to provide additional information which they had not provided. Photographs, music, album covers, newspaper clippings, posters, concert flyers and programmes, magazines, books, album and concert reviews, video footage and recordings of radio interviews were all part of the archival material musicians made available to me as a result of these requests. Further archival research was undertaken after interviews to confirm information provided in interviews. These additional sources included archival collections of radio stations and record companies; Government archives including the Film and Publication Board (formerly the

Directorate of Publications) archives, Government Gazette's (where the banning of music was listed) and Hansard (House of Assembly Debates); prominent national newspapers and a variety of magazines.

Furthermore, corroboration did not simply operate between the different research methods but within each one as well. For example, checking one interviewee's version of events against that of another interviewee or comparing information in a newspaper article with information contained within Directorate of Publications files. It is important to note therefore that evidence provided in this thesis has passed through a stringent process of corroboration and has been accepted as an accurate reflection of the events that happened. In particular, statements made by musicians are not quoted at face value, but have been carefully considered and analyzed before inclusion. In using all possible sources of information, instances of re-remembered pasts as outlined here have been clarified so that the theoretical underpinnings of this research are not based on false memories, errors or deliberate attempts to manipulate the past.

3.4 Songs as texts: superseding content analysis

In this thesis critical textual analysis has been used to go beyond a simple objectified reading of the lyrics, "emphasizing the structure of listening, in which meaning is mutually produced in different contexts" (Balliger, 1995: 17). Focus on musical texts has ranged from debates concerning the extent to which abstract music is able to communicate ideologies and ideas (Rhodes, 1962: 14) to debates concerning the indisputable meaning of particular lyrics: to what extent are specific lyrics open to varying interpretation? In terms of the former, Veit Erlmann (1985: 187) talks of examples in which one and the same tune have been sung to different words by diametrically opposed political groups while, in a demonstration of the latter, Simon Frith (1996a: 165) discusses how Tory Party members joined hands for John Lennon's "Imagine" (1971) at a pre-election rally in the 1980s and the Republican Party attempted to use Bruce Springsteen's "Born in the USA" (1984) in the 1984 presidential election. Indeed, "Born in the USA" (1984) was very popular amongst army recruits in South Africa, as were Gang of Four's "I love a man in uniform" (1982) and Bob Marley's "Buffalo soldier" (1983). Radio listeners sending dedications to army recruits on the

'Forces favourites' SABC propaganda request programme repeatedly requested these songs. In each instance the element of protest in the songs was lost: it would be mistaken to argue that these were examples of musical meaning being subverted, appropriated or reclaimed by the dominant culture. These instances of "lyrical drift" (Frith, 1996a: 165) are not restricted to political songs. Rey Chow (1993) provides an interesting analysis of popular music in China where light-hearted and frivolous music creates a discourse of resistance against the dominant discourse with its rhetoric of class struggle. For Chow, popular music strikes notes of difference from the single official ideology, and as such the cassette Walkman potentially creates a sonic barrier of resistance.

These cases, and many others, demonstrate that musical meaning needs to be located in extra-musical processes and that textual analysis cannot be effective without integrating music and lyrics. For Frith (1996a: 166) the key to lyrical analysis is not simply the words, but words in performance. Lyrics are regarded as a form of rhetoric or oratory and consequently need to be treated in terms of "a persuasive relationship between singer and listener". As such the song does not exist to convey the meaning of words, but the words exist to convey the meaning of the song. As Frith (1996a: 164) puts it, "song words are not about ideas ('content') but about their expression." For this reason we must guard against separating the words of songs from their use as speech acts – "words to be analysed in performance". For example, he claims that protest songs do not convey ideas or arguments but slogans, as was the case with Bruce Springsteen's "Born in the USA" (1984) referred to earlier (Frith, 1996a: 165). Similarly, in South Africa, white South African youth would triumphantly join in to sing the chorus of Juluka's "Impi" (1981) when it was performed at concerts – the chorus paid tribute to the strength of the Zulu warrior, sung in Zulu. If these songs solely affected listeners through their words, the likelihood of misappropriation would be minimal. Songs thus act as a vehicle for expression, as words, rhetoric and voice combine¹ to create a mood that the singer conveys to the listener. These elements, combined with the persuasive power of the actual musical setting and performance, produce a total meaning which cannot be

¹ Frith (1996a: 159) notes that when we listen "to the lyrics of pop songs we actually hear three things at once: *words*, which appear to give songs an independent source of semantic meaning; *rhetoric*, words being used in a special, music way, a way which draws attention to features and problems of speech; and *voices*, words being spoken or sung in human tones which are themselves 'meaningful' signs of persons and personality".

discovered through content analysis alone. As Balliger (1995: 16) argues: "Reading didactic lyrics as literal and complete in the communication of meaning ignores the many subtexts and levels of meaning occurring in the production and performance of music". The discussion of the Kalahari Surfers' subversive covers of popular songs (in Chapter Seven) best emphasizes this point: using the same lyrics and tune but performing songs differently is able to dramatically change the meaning of songs.

Despite the importance of songs as texts, it needs to be made clear that this is a sociological study of a process involving musicians and their struggle against the censorship of their music. It is not a musicological study. Some song texts are considered in relation to their musical setting to exemplify the processes which musicians were able to incorporate in saying more with their music than mere lyrics reflect. This is why music lyrics cannot be treated equally to poetry. Even Mzwakhe Mbuli's spoken poetry cannot be approached in exactly the same manner as his poetry (even the same poems) when put to musical accompaniment. But this study is not an in-depth consideration of musicological issues concerning the music examples discussed (for example detailed consideration of form, notation and such like). Rather a sociological study is interested in the social meaning of music, without necessarily going into musicological depth. As indicated, aspects of the music itself are important, and are given consideration to make relevant points when needed.

3.5 Conclusion

The triangulated use of oral and textual evidence that have formed the basis of this thesis shed light on factors at play in both supporting and undermining the censorship of music in South Africa during the 1980s. Every attempt has been made to discover as much information as possible and to corroborate the memories and views of musicians as they recalled events and processes. I have made a special effort to go beyond simply documenting what was censored and what escaped censorship. I have focused on the musicians and other role players and the stories they have told about their experiences. This is why these voices are quoted extensively throughout this thesis, so as to accurately capture the sentiments expressed by interviewees. The subjects' experiences are

important to the struggle which took place, and they are best expressed in the words of the respondents themselves.

This thesis now moves on to reveal the information gathered through the research process. The information gained is analysed in terms of the theoretical considerations outlined in Chapter Two. This is intended to provide a clearer insight into the cultural dynamics surrounding the censorship of popular music in a complex society.

CHAPTER FOUR

State mechanisms of censorship

And you know it's so damned easy
To turn and look away
And you only need say nothing
To have nothing at all to say

(“You Only Need Say Nothing” (1979) – Roger Lucey)

4.1 Introduction

A core component of the Nationalist government's apartheid system was the enforcement of its policies of racial inequality and separation and narrowly interpreted Christian morality through the statute books and state repression. It put into place structures of control in an attempt to regulate the individual's cultural and political conditions. Acts such as the Suppression of Communism Act 44 of 1950, the Riotous Assemblies Act 17 of 1956 and the Internal Security Act 74 of 1982 were passed to enforce a narrowly defined and oppressive form of law and order. An important area of political, moral and religious control involved published material, including books, magazines, film, music and pamphlets. A host of general apartheid laws (for example, the Post Office Act 44 of 1958) and security acts (including those mentioned above) prohibited freedom of speech or free access to publications (see Hepple, 1960 and Marcus, 1987 for further discussion of these laws).

The Entertainments (Censorship) Act 28 of 1931 was initially intended to deal with film censorship, but was later extended, in conjunction with the Customs Act 55 of 1955, to deal with imported printed matter. In 1963 government censorship was centralized and consolidated according to apartheid ideology when the Publications and Entertainments Act 2 of 1963 was promulgated. Peter Stewart (1990: 17) argued that: “By placing the advent of ‘coherent’ censorship in 1963 one adjusts it to coincide with the development of apartheid: it becomes an integral part of the apartheid order”.

Although the Publications and Entertainments Act was initially used to deal with literature, over the years it also dealt with and was used to ban recorded music. Some of the earliest of these included *An Evening with Harry Belafonte and Miriam Makeba*

(1965), the musicals *Jesus Christ Superstar* (1969) and *Godspell* (1971) and Don McLean's "American Pie" (1971). Musicians were also victim to more general apartheid legislation (for example to do with racial mixing) and police action.

The 1963 Act was eventually replaced by the Publications Act of 1974, the Act which was in place during the focus period of this thesis. This chapter begins by outlining the implications of the new act and considers in general the mechanisms of censorship practised by the Nationalist government in its attempts to minimize the impact of musicians and their music. Censorship was framed by and took place within an increasingly complex state institutional system. This system included the judiciary, the civil service, the church and the police, all of whom co-operated at different times in various ways to uphold its policies. As argued in Chapter One, overt forms of repression were an integral component of the censorship system, and therefore warrant attention in this chapter.

Notwithstanding the government's attempt to maintain its hegemony, musicians fought back in a multitude of ways. Strategies of resistance employed by musicians are specifically dealt with later (in Chapters Seven and Eight), and this chapter should be read with an awareness that instances of contest often arose directly from specific state action outlined here. Failure to do so would lead to an overly structuralist view of government censorship not justified by the evidence at hand. In the period under scrutiny government censorship was continually adjusted and altered according to resistance. Despite a heavy artillery of laws, mechanisms and available force, it is argued in this thesis that the apartheid state was never able to achieve hegemony. This chapter therefore needs to be read as a reflection of a braided process of actions and reactions from all involved rather than as a polarized struggle between two forces, one supporting and the other opposing apartheid. As argued in Chapter Two, this would simplify a compound process involving a wide array of actors with an equally diverse set of motivations.

4.2 Formal censorship: Publications Control Act and Customs and Excise Act

Prior to 1974, procedures for direct government censorship were outlined in The Publication and Entertainments Act 2 of 1963 (and two subsequent Amendments – the Publications and Entertainments Amendment Act 85 of 1969 and Act 32 of 1971). Under

Section 8 of the 1963 Act, provision was made for the appointment of a Publications Control Board (PCB). The PCB was appointed by the Minister of the Interior who also designated both the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Board. For the first time a centralized group was appointed to oversee the structuring of moral and political discourse in South Africa. The Board consisted of no fewer than nine members of whom at least six had to be persons with a "special knowledge" of art, language and literature or the administration of justice. The appointed Board was invested with the power to determine whether, in its opinion, any publication was 'undesirable'. J. M Coetzee (1996: viii) concludes that the government censor used the term 'undesirable' to mean "that not ought to be desired". In other words, the desire of the object in question was undesirable according to the state's political-moral framework, or in Bourdieu's terms, the particular discourse did not comply with the structural limitations of the government's prescribed political-moral field.

According to Section 4 of the Act, the Board could appoint committees to examine and report on material submitted or public entertainment reported to the board. Such committees had to be chaired by a member of the Board and consist of at least two other people appointed as members of the Board from a panel of people designated by the Minister of the Interior. In general, if the Board declared a publication 'undesirable' it was a criminal offence to print, publish, distribute, display, exhibit or sell or offer to keep for sale any such publication (Suzman, 1972: 1). Clearly this was intended to prevent the "emergent of the contingent" (Diawara, 1997:457) in the form of publications which threatened to undermine the state-protected dominant discourse.

An additional aspect of state censorship was set out in The Customs and Excise Act 91 of 1964, which made it an offence to import "goods which are indecent, obscene or on any ground whatsoever objectionable, unless imported under permit issued by the Publications Control Board". According to Section 113(3)(a) of the Act, if any question arose as to whether any goods were indecent, obscene or objectionable, the article in question was to be forwarded to the PCB whose decision would be final (in those instances where a decision had not previously been made). This meant that the deciding authority in relation to both the Customs and the Publications and Entertainments Act was the PCB.

The Publications Act of 1974 replaced previous Acts and became the central mechanism for the direct censorship of publications, visual images, theatre, films and recordings in South Africa. The central factor distinguishing the Publications Act of 1974 from earlier versions had to do with the right to appeal. In terms of Section 14 of The Publications and Entertainments Act of 1963, decisions of the PCB were subject to appeal to a provincial or local division of the Supreme Court, and a further appeal could be made to the Appellate Division of the Supreme Court. The 1974 Act abolished the right to appeal to a court of law. The Minister of Interior – Mr S L Muller – argued that this was a necessary step because the provisions of the 1963 Act were unsatisfactory, given that the Board was a body of specialists, thus more competent than the courts at deciding the country's morals. In May 1969, during the second reading of the Publications and Entertainments Amendment Bill, Mr Muller argued:

“My modest opinion is that there is no one in South Africa, from the Chief Justice down – and I say this without detracting from anyone's good judgement – who is better able to decide on these matters than the Publications Board itself”(Hansard, 1969: 5872, 5874).

Arthur Suzman (1972: 3) strongly contested this assumption. To begin with, he noted that:

“Of the ten members of the Board and the fourteen members of the panel, it would appear that but a single member has specialized knowledge of the administration of justice, namely the Vice-chairman, a former magistrate, who holds the Public Service Higher Law Certificate. The chairman is listed as having passed the preliminary LLB”.

Suzman (1972: 3) argued that the judiciary was better equipped to deal with appeals because its members had special training and office to discount their own subjective viewpoints in favour of the rule of law. However, Van Rooyen (1987: 5) argued that the slowness of the judicial process, together with the reluctance of the courts to pass a judgment of guilty before it was clear that particular criteria had been reached, hampered the criminal law route. Furthermore, he noted that prior to the 1974 Act judges often indicated that making moral decisions (according to South African standards) was

“foreign to the judicial process, that they could bring the courts into controversy, and they also indicated that they would rather not perform this function”.

As a consequence of arguments of this sort, and despite objections such as those made by Suzman, the new Publications Act was passed in 1974 and came into effect on 1 April 1975. The Act made provisions for the establishment of The Directorate of Publication (hereafter referred to as ‘the Directorate’) which, according to former Director of Publications, Braam Coetzee (Interview, 1998), acted as the:

administrative arm of the whole control machine.

It was linked to the Department of Home Affairs, but answerable to Parliament. The Minister of Home Affairs intended the Directorate to be independent, but sometimes he did question its decisions, as did the Minister of Law and Order. However, the Directorate was not answerable to any government ministry. Decisions were carried out by a committee appointed by the Minister of Internal Affairs, and objections were referred to the Publications Appeal Board (PAB) which was also a government-appointed committee designed to set aside or confirm decisions of the Directorate. The State President appointed the chairman of the PAB for a period of five years.

The process of banning a publication began with a submission to the Directorate. Braam Coetzee (Interview, 1998) explained that:

Publications were only examined when somebody – and it could be anybody; any person had the right – asked the directorate that a particular publication be submitted to a committee for examination and a finding. You had no option if you were requested by whoever no matter how insignificant or important ... you had to submit it to a committee and the committee had to make a finding.

However, the Directorate did not act in isolation and often relied on members of civil society to bring publications to its attention. The Directorate itself did not go in search of material to ban, it only responded to complaints received. Braam Coetzee (Interview, 1998) revealed that:

What we made clear to all and sundry is that we are not a police force. We are not going out like sniffer dogs, trying to look for things. We are there just as an administrative body to whom people who have any particular request or complaint can submit things and then according to the Act we have got to react.

But I have always resented it if people come to me and say, 'Why don't you go and look for this? Why don't you go to the record shops? Why don't you go and look there and see what is going on?' That is not my job. If it is anybody's job at all, it is the narcotics bureau who have got to do those things and if they send something to us we will look at it and we will submit to a committee but we are not going to do that ourselves.

This was in contrast to films and videos which all had to receive a certificate of approval before they could be shown. The Customs and Excise Division and the police did regularly forward items to the Directorate for decisions, but so too did members of civil society in the form of moral and religious pressure groups (see discussion below).

Furthermore, by employing the notion of 'the likely reader/viewer/listener' in its judgements, the Directorate of Publications did not act entirely autonomously of existing power relations to do with, for example, moral and religious standards. Thus relations of power extended beyond the limits of the state. In this way the Directorate operated on the basis of, and slotted into, "already existing power relations" (Foucault, 1980: 122), working with certain members of the public to perpetuate the dominant discourse.

The reliance of the Directorate on other (outside) agents to affect censorship procedures is noteworthy because it debunks the common perception during the apartheid era of the Directorate as a mere instrument of the apartheid state's whims and desires concerning published material. All censors were seen as bad and wholeheartedly pro-apartheid, government agents. In the setting-up of and adherence to these binary positions, the polar regions themselves were exaggerated in an attempt to fix the boundaries as rigidly as possible. Many commentators portrayed the Directorate as omnipresent surveyors of all material, with all-encompassing surveillance powers and acting independently of the rest of society. Nadine Gordimer (1976: 44) set the tone by describing censorship as an "octopus of thought surveillance". J. M Coetzee (1997: 199), in a typical overstatement of the position, claimed that the censorship laws involved "the construction of a bureaucracy of censorship entrusted with the task of scrutinizing every book, every magazine, every film, every record, every stage performance, every T-shirt to appear in the land" in what he called a "manifestation of total-onslaught paranoia". This flawed view of an all-powerful Directorate was shared by many academics writing about popular

music. For example, Charles Hamm (1995: 210) observed that the 1985 Shifty Records' FOSATU Workers' Choirs release which contained a number of freedom songs "was somehow passed by the censors" when in fact it was never submitted to the censors to begin with. Similarly, Gwangwa and van Aurich (1989: 155) refer to the record companies' "need to clear the statutory Publications Control Board". Likewise, Gilder (1983: 19) argued that the lyrics of 'Another brick in the wall' "managed to escape the attention of the censors until an adapted version of the refrain became the rallying song of black schoolchildren during their mass campaign against apartheid education in 1980. Then the song was banned". As many others have done, Byerly (1998: 33-34) even attributed the Directorate with the banning of a song which it never banned. In discussing Bright Blue's "Weeping" (1987) she erroneously states that: "It was a long time before the message was received by the authorities and the song was banned immediately when the subversive content was recognized". Likewise, Coplan mistakenly (2000: 353) claims that Sipho Mabuse's album *Chant of the Marching* (1989) was banned in South Africa. In yet another example, Timothy Taylor (1997: 176) claims that Juluka's song "Africa" (1979) was "a number one hit before being banned". In fact the song was number one on independent Capital Radio and was banned by the SABC, which had no bearing on the song's status on Capital Radio. Both Taylor and Jeremy Marre and Hannah Charlton (1985) to whom Taylor refers, fail to distinguish between central government censorship and that of the SABC, creating the impression that the Directorate of Publications was banning music that was in fact banned only by the SABC. Analysis of South African music is riddled with these sorts of errors, many of which seem to emanate from the clear-cut boundaries of political and ideological polarization, where facts are at worst manipulated, at best misconstrued, according to the place they seem to fit most comfortably. Indeed (and paradoxically), Byerly herself (1996: 12) argues that the positing of two opposing positions presents useful poles within which people conduct their discourse, but that "the tendency to conceptualize and speak within the constraints of this polarizing terminology has resulted in numerous over-simplifications and inevitable stalemates".

Once music was submitted to the Directorate for review, the procedure was the same as that with other (non-film and video) publications. On receipt of material the committee

would decide whether a publication was either 'desirable' or 'not undesirable' and if 'undesirable' could ban the record. For Braam Coetzee (Interview, 1998) the lyrics were central. He explained that:

One must differentiate between music and what accompanied the music. I think it was mostly lyrics. I think music as such can never be harmful really. So it was just the lyrics that were coupled to the music. So it concerned the lyrics.

Whenever a ban was placed it was because of the lyrics.

Coetzee (Interview, 1998) believed that:

The police would have been interested in the music in so far as music coupled with certain lyrics was used to work on a particular confluence of people, groups of people influencing them to get out of hand, or rowdy or violent or something like that. I think we know that music is quite a potent factor in that direction. It could sway the emotions of people ... and then coupled with particular stimulating lyrics it could be powerful. I think that was what they were interested in.

This is an important difference from the situation in Nazi Germany where jazz as a musical form was prohibited because it was regarded as Jewish and Negro music (Negus, 1996: 204). Similarly in Afghanistan during Taliban rule most forms of music (and all musical instruments) were outlawed for religious reasons (Baily, 2001: 7). In South Africa there was not a musical form regarded as undesirable per se, although certain sounds were regarded as problematic in conjunction with 'undesirable' lyrics. Even the government's separate development did not make it undesirable for whites to play traditional African music or for blacks to play music traditionally associated with whites. The problem – as will be discussed below – had to do with the political constraints placed on performance in terms of who could perform together, where and when. These were not matters of concern to the Directorate.

In addition to banning music because of the lyrics, the Directorate sometimes banned albums because of their covers. Although banning album covers is strictly related more to rules concerning printed publications than music, album covers are an integral part of the commodified popular music package. As a result, a ban placed on an album cover outlawed the album: music and all. Only a change to the design of the album cover could

reinstate the album as a legal commodity. This involved additional cost and affected the artistic integrity of the entire package.

It is clear from the discussion so far that the government's system of censorship was about controlling spaces, both figurative and real. For Bourdieu (2000: 9), existing within a social space, occupying a point or being an individual within a social space, involves difference, being different. Agents' positions within this space therefore gave rise to "variations of perception" (Bourdieu, 1987: 132), dependent on agents' habitus, and the extent to which they took their habitus for granted. Bourdieu (1977: 18) argued that agents "are inevitably subject to the censorship inherent in their habitus, a system of schemes of perception and thought which cannot give what it does give to be thought and perceived without *ipso facto* producing an unthinkable and unnameable". Those granted the power to censor use the censorship process to draw the boundaries of acceptable discourse (the dominant discourse) within their field of jurisdiction.

To begin with, the state censor launched attacks on controversial material from a self-created and imagined centre, "an arbiter between contending social forces" (J. M. Coetzee, 1996: 186) attempting to obscure the manner in which, as state censor, it was an integral component of the most powerful contending social force, policing the boundaries of the dominant discourse. Director of the PAB, Van Rooyen (1987: 3) admitted this much when he suggested that the role of the state censor was to provide "for a framework within which the arts may be performed". This constituted the state's duty to maintain "order in society" (Van Rooyen, 1987: 3). Van Rooyen (1987: 20) literally envisaged the state censor ensuring this order by patrolling the country's geographic borders: he claimed that amongst other things "the aim of legislation is to keep pornography and blasphemy out of the country" (Van Rooyen, 1987: 20) as though pornography and blasphemy only came from the extreme margins, off the country's map to be precise. Van Rooyen (1987: 106) imagined a space in which the state censor's duty was to "strike a balance between opposing interests" in an attempt to serve the supposed "general interests" (Van Rooyen, 1987: 3) of the public. Operating from what was clearly the political centre (a position of centralized political power), the state censor hoped to foster conditions favourable to the dominant discourse. According to the Publications Act this discourse comprised six areas as outlined below.

4.2.1. Categories of Censorship

Section 47(2) of the Publications Act defines the meaning of the term 'undesirable', which was used by the Directorate and PAB in deciding the status of material submitted to it. According to the Act, a publication or object, film or public entertainment, or any part thereof is deemed to be undesirable if it:

- "a) is indecent or obscene or offensive or harmful to public morals;
- b) is blasphemous or is offensive to the religious convictions or feelings of any section of the inhabitants of the Republic;
- c) brings any section of the inhabitants of the Republic into ridicule or contempt;
- d) is harmful to the relations between any sections of the inhabitants of the Republic;
- e) is prejudicial to the safety of the state, the general welfare or the peace and good order;
- f) discloses with reference to any judicial proceedings –
 - (i) any matter which is indecent or obscene or is offensive or harmful to public morals;
 - (ii) any indecent or obscene medical, surgical or physiological details, the disclosure of which is likely to be offensive or harmful to public morals."

These six clauses provide an interesting summation of the apartheid state's moral-political framework or field within which they expected all South Africans to exist. These were the limits of desirability. Failure to conform would place individuals on the outside, to be brought in line by coercive state power. However, the values embodied by these clauses were also upheld by a system of institutions within civil society, including schools, religious groups, the media and cultural organizations. These institutions, together with the state's coercive institutions, worked to establish the moral leadership of the apartheid state. The moral-political framework as outlined in the Publications Act can therefore be seen to form the parameters of the dominant discourse, integrally connecting moral, religious and political criteria so that the promotion of any one of these areas implied an attack on the entire hegemonic project. This can be clearly seen in Van Rooyen's suggestion that pornography and blasphemy entered South Africa from outside the country. His claim implies, for anyone familiar with the government's 'total onslaught' rhetoric, that pornography and blasphemy were part of a communist

onslaught. Such rhetoric was typical of the state's attempt to rally the support of divergent sectors within South African society, who ultimately constituted a significant historic bloc.

Of the categories of censorship listed above, the Directorate only ever cited four as reasons for the banning of music (Jacobsens, 1991: XLIX-LIV). The categories most often cited dealt with obscenity (clause a), blasphemy (clause b) and political threats (clause e), but on occasion songs were banned because they were judged to be harmful to the relations between sections of the South African population (clause d).

During the 1970s songs like "Take Off Your Clothes" by Peter Sarstedt (1975), "Love to Love You Baby" by Donna Summer (1975) and a number of Frank Zappa albums had been banned by the Directorate because of obscene lyrics. In May 1980 Marianne Faithfull's *Broken English* was banned because of obscene language in the song "Why D'ya do it". The main single from the album, "The Ballad of Lucy Jordan" (1979) had been the number one song of the year on SABC's Radio 5. In 1986 a series of letters were sent to the Directorate protesting the lyrics of George Michael's "I Want Your Sex" (1987). It was subsequently banned.

In the early-to-mid 1970s as previously indicated, the musicals *Jesus Christ Superstar* (1969) and *Godspell* (1971) were banned for religious reasons, as were Don McLean's "American Pie" (1971) and Chris De Burgh's *Spanish Train and Other Stories* (1976) because of the song "Spanish Train". In the 1980s albums banned because of blasphemy included Dollar Brand's *Africa – Tears and Laughter* (1979) as a result of the track "Ishmael", *Christ the Album* by Crass (1982) and *Bigger Than Jesus* by the Kalahari Surfers (1989).

The most common reason for banning music during the 1980s was for political reasons, when the music was seen to pose a threat to the security of the state. Prior to the 1980s, albums by Miriam Makeba and Peter Tosh were amongst those banned for political reasons. The 1980s saw a number of overseas songs similarly banned. These included: "Another Brick in the Wall" by Pink Floyd (1979); "Biko" by Peter Gabriel (1980); "Free Nelson Mandela" by Special AKA (1984); and "Sun City" by Artists United Against Apartheid (1985). South African musician Roger Lucey was also victim of the Directorate. His debut album *The Road is Much Longer* (1979) was banned for

distribution and possession in 1982, after police had forwarded a copy to the Directorate. Four of the tracks on the album were regarded as “definitely dangerous for the safety of the State and create a climate of protest against the Police and the present order of the State” (Directorate of Publications, 1982: P82/9/115). These were “Crossroads”, “Lungile Tabalaza”, “You only need say nothing” and “Thabane”. On appeal, the PAB decided to set aside the ban for possession but upheld the ban for distribution. It particularly objected to the lyrics of “Thabane” which it felt constituted “a direct or indirect call to action, to the battle ground, to revolution” (Directorate of Publications, 1982: P82/9/115). In 1986 Mzwakhe Mbuli’s *Change is Pain* (1986) album was banned because:

“its uplifting music and dramatic recitation will find great appeal amongst revolutionary groups and mass gatherings in the RSA. It has the ability to sweep up the masses and in the current revolutionary climate it will motivate the masses to participate with the forces that want to make the RSA ungovernable. It encourages violence and supports the ANC’s struggle to overthrow the government by means of violence. It is thus harmful to the security and general peace of the state and also threatens the upholding of law and order” (Directorate of Publications, 1986: P86/12/24).

As far as can be ascertained (Jacobsens, 1991: XLIX-LIV), only twice was music banned because of its harmful effects on relations between sections of the South African population. These were the soundtrack to the film *Hair* (1969), various versions of which were banned in the 1970s (with indecency as an additional contributing factor) and William Dube’s *Take Cover* (1981) banned in 1981 (with the safety of the state cited as an additional reason). Supporting documents for these two cases could not be located, thus elaboration on the reasons cannot be provided.

4.2.2 The role of moral and religious pressure groups in government censorship

As indicated earlier, in many instances moral and religious pressure groups were integrally involved in the state’s formal censorship process. The involvement of these groups took a variety of forms: bringing music to the attention of the Directorate; lobbying through petitions and sometimes a flood of letters; directly advising the Directorate; and in some instances thanking the Directorate for their decisions. Given the

additional calls for boycotting of music internally within particular religious groups, the actions of these groups should not be understated. Through their actions they legitimized the state's role as censor, not only requesting its assistance and supporting instances of state censorship of 'offensive' religious material but in some instances calling for the banning of music for political reasons, thus choosing to align themselves with the state, even politically.

Braam Coetzee (Interview, 1998) indicated that sometimes these pressure groups would take a more conservative line than the Directorate itself:

I have had more pressure from some of these new born again Christian groups, the Pentecostal, more charismatic people...they have been endlessly, endlessly, problematic and they have given us a hard time. They linked up with groups in America, obviously very well off people, they have got lots of money, and they engage lobbyists in senate and congress nagging the people all the time and bringing pressure to bear on them. They have had success there, and they, in fact, were in communication with groups that were founded in South Africa all the time ... They were getting well organized and they were tremendously powerful pressure groups.

While some religious groups (Christian and Muslim included) did oppose the state, the relationship which some of these groups had with the Directorate emphasizes that the state did not operate alone in censoring music (as well as other publications). In this instance religious groups, working according to their own agendas, were quick to support the state, bringing about censorship of music which otherwise would not have been censored.

The conservative church group, the Nederduitse Gereformeerde Kerk (NGK), involved itself at the highest level in censorship in South Africa. In 1971 the General Synod of the NGK passed a resolution calling for the abolition of the right to appeal to the Supreme Court as provided for in the Publications and Entertainments Act of 1963. Instead they called for the establishment of a "special court of appeal" which consisted of "authorities in various fields". The Deputy Minister of the Interior at the time, Dr S W van der Merwe, promised to consider this representation (Suzman, 1972: 2). Indeed this representation was adopted by the government in the Publications Act of 1974, which (as

outlined above) did away with the right to appeal to the Supreme Court in favour of setting up the PAB.

In the 1980s Christians linked to the NGK were strongly involved in protests leading up to the banning of songs like Pink Floyd's "Another Brick in the Wall" (1979) and George Michael's "I Want Your Sex" (1987). The latter was banned after a successful campaign involving the submission of many letters of complaint to the Directorate. A letter submitted by Mr Van Heerden of the NGK in Welverdiend was typical. He wrote that:

"The Kerkraad (Church Board) had requested that I submit an objection to the pop singer George Michael's song, 'I want your sex'. It is shocking to hear such songs. It is used to influence our young people, the pride of our country, in such a way that it corrupts their morals. Our Country needs good citizens, and the Communists cannot handle this. They only want to bring us to a fall. We rely on you to put an end to such songs and to prohibit it from being broadcast on the television and radio" (Directorate of Publications, P87/08/160).

The song was subsequently banned because the censors believed the song to be harmful to public morals.

"Another Brick in the Wall" was banned after a complaint was received from Mr W Erasmus, Chairperson of the N. G. Student branch of the Pretoria Teachers Training College. The album had already sold 39 000 copies and the single 90 000 copies when the single and album were banned. The students argued that:

"We listened to it in detail and considered its consequences. In the long term it will undermine the authority of our schools. The type of music, the words and singing style must have an influence on the children, which will result in disorder.... We are convinced that this record cultivates an environment for communism. In fact it forms part of their program" (Directorate of Publications, 1980: P80/4/49).

The Directorate of Publications agreed with the sentiments expressed in this letter and decided to ban both the album and the single. It was noted that the lyrics of the song were:

"undesirable insofar as they amount to a protest song against education and school discipline, at a time when there is so much student and pupil unrest and protest

against the education system for coloureds and blacks" (Directorate of Publications, 1980: P80/4/49).

Not only did Christians submit records for assessment, but after music was banned they often vindicated Directorate decisions by writing letters of appreciation. For example, in a letter to the Directorate in response to the banning of "Another Brick in the Wall" a Mrs Aylwand wrote:

"I just want to express my sincere thanks to you for the way you are helping to build SA up into a better world, and not allowing everything to just pass by. I thank God for people who are still willing to make a stand. May God bless you, because this record called 'Brick in the wall' will really bring the wrong ideas into children's heads. Look at the trouble we are already having with the young people of SA. After all, it is them that will rule in the long run. Praise God for your stand.

I as a mother of two small children am really concern (sic) for what we allow our children to hear and see. May we see that with the grace of God more records like 'Brick in the wall' by Pink Floyd get banned.

Thank you for your concern in this matter, without you we cannot do a thing, but you can. We as the family of God will keep praying for you, and once again out of the debt of our heart a sincere thank you, we stand behind you.

May God really bless you abundantly" (Directorate of Publications, 1980: P80/4/49).

Some people even went as far as to alert the Directorate to instances where their bans were not being effective. Mrs Venter, President of Clean World, an organization linked to the St James Church, Kenilworth branch of the Church of England in South Africa, submitted a newspaper article to the Directorate. The article informed readers about loopholes in the Directorate's ban of Pink Floyd's *The Wall* (1979) which would allow them to acquire a copy of the album (Directorate of Publications, 1980: P80/4/49).

The Kalahari Surfers' *Bigger Than Jesus* (1989) was banned after complaints were received from representatives of a Pentecostal Christian pressure group. One of the letters of complaint received from a member of a religious group stated:

"I send the cover of a new record, which was apparently produced by a South African pop group. The record is called Bigger than Jesus. The name alone is

enough to make any Christian furious, not to mention the words. We as reborn Christians object to the publication of this record and also the distribution of it. You will find more than 600 signatures which I gathered very quickly, I can assure you, however that we are hundreds of thousands that object to this record. We call upon you, as a respected organization, to prohibit these records and tapes, which slanders our King and Saviour" (Directorate of Publications, 1989: P89/05/51).

The album was found undesirable in terms of two criteria: firstly, the cover of the record, with the title *Bigger Than Jesus*, was found to be undesirable as were the lyrics of one particular song – "Gutted With the Glory". The song used a cut-up of 'The Lord's Prayer' condemning an SADF raid on Maseru.

Christians were not the only religious pressure groups to get involved in the call for government censorship of music. In 1980 The Muslim Judicial Council called for the banning of Abdullah Ibrahim's "Ishmael" off the *Africa: Tears and Laughter* (1979) album. Sheikh Najaar, President of the Muslim Judicial Council, submitted a letter of complaint to the Directorate, declaring that:

"at a Supreme Council meeting of the Muslim Judicial Council held last night (26 November 1980), the following resolution was unanimously adopted: This Council being the authoritative body of the Muslims, hereby request the Directorate of Publications to ban the record ... because, a) It seriously offends Islamic sensitivities and is an attempt to commercialise the Holy Quran (Islamic book of law) in that the record has as one of its cuts 2 verses of the Holy Quran, viz The Fatiha and Ayatul Khursi, being sung to jazz music. b) It will create ill-feelings amongst the Muslim community as this sacrilegious act lowers the dignity of our faith" (Directorate of Publications, 1980: P80/12/11).

In response, on the advice of two members of the Muslim Judicial Council appointed to assist the Directorate, the latter decided to ban the album. The decision to ban the album was explained as follows:

"After thorough consideration the Board have decided that the record is undesirable by virtue of section 47(2)(b) of the Act, within the light of the following considerations: The specific Muslim prayer that is worded on the track,

plays an important role in the Muslim religion. The believer is supposed to recite the prayer seventeen times a day. In the more than 1400 years of the existence of the Muslim religion, the prayer has never been put to music, because putting it to music will transgress the holiness of the prayer. On the record the prayer is not only accompanied by music, but is presented in a way that belongs in the home or in the dance hall, and this while the Muslim religion is strongly opposed to dancing. In essence it is a highly unworthy manner in which the Muslim prayer is presented on the record. It will give offence to the religious convictions and feelings of the Muslim community. This record is undesirable, because of its harmful influence on Muslim religious sentiments" (Directorate of Publications: 1980: P80/12/11).

These cases highlight the role of outside religious pressure groups in bringing about the banning of music which otherwise would probably not have been banned. The political nature of "Another Brick in the Wall" is also important, revealing the NGK as a political ally of the State, not restricting its objections to religious and sexual concerns. The Muslim Judiciary Council's willingness to be co-opted onto a Directorate advisory committee (albeit over a religious issue) indicates clear support for a state structure. This support emphasizes Foucault's (1976: 93) conception of power as a multiplicity of force relations. Importantly for Foucault, power does not have a single originary source, but is dispersed throughout society (Foucault, 1976: 94). Even in terms of official government-sanctioned censorship practice, acts of censorship were not confined to a centralized state operating autonomously, nor was control located solely in the offices of the Directorate of Publications and the Publications Appeal Board. The support of a various non-government bodies was central to the operation of formal state censors.

4.2.3 Contest over liberalization of central government censorship bodies

An important trend towards the (relative) liberalization of the Directorate and PAB began in the early 1980s (Stewart, 1990; Interviews with Coetzee and Van Rooyen, 1998). It began to take stronger effect (in terms of decisions) in the mid-1980s. As noted in Chapter Two, this trend towards liberalization paralleled economic and political developments in South Africa more generally. The need to ensure (in the urban areas) a

more stable workforce and to establish a black middle class necessitated a change in the dominant discourse and a consequent change in the censors' interpretation of the 'undesirable'. To accommodate the state's attempt to establish a coalition of interests which included the black middle class, a liberalization of the Directorate and PAB was essential, so as to avoid alienating conservative members of the black middle class. A change in hegemony thus resulted in a shifting emphasis within government institutions charged with the execution of policies related to the dominant discourse. This is evidenced in the way in which both the Director of Publications, Braam Coetzee, and the Chairman of the PAB, Jacobus Van Rooyen wanted the Directorate and PAB to reflect a more liberal attitude. Coetzee (Interview, 1998) explained:

When I came in at the beginning of 1981, we were just on the verge of changing into a more enlightened age, so to speak, because Professor Van Rooyen was the new Chairman of the Publications Appeal Board. He succeeded old judge Lammie Snyman who was a very, very conservative and a hard-boiled man.

Indeed, in 1980 Van Rooyen (cited in Stewart, 1990: 19) commented: "If you look at the early decisions by the Board and compare them to our very recent findings you will see that there is a difference. This trend will continue".

The basis of many aspects of Section 47/2 of the Publications Act was 'public opinion'. In 1978 the Act was amended and one of the changes included the introduction of new criteria for 'public opinion'. The 'likely audience' took the place of the 'public at large', making the situation easier for more liberal decisions to be made. Braam Coetzee (Interview, 1998) explained that:

As public opinion developed, by way of evolution in the whole political process, so things got more easy. The process was ongoing and as that process developed, decision-making also became more liberal.

The personal situation and philosophy of the censors was important in this liberalization of the government censorship apparatus. Braam Coetzee (Interview, 1998) explained that:

I felt that I could exert a bit of independence because I came here having wanted to retire. I wasn't looking for a job. I was different because my two predecessors were part-time civil servants. They had to look after their job. If they were required by somebody [to ban something] and that person would bring pressure to

bear on the minister, they would say: 'You do this'. But they couldn't do that ever since the time I was appointed. They tried it, and I don't want to go into details. They often tried it but I said, 'No, I am not going to do that. I am not going to do your dirty work. If you can't do it, don't push it on me. Do it if you want to do it'. So they had to do it by themselves. They were covered by law, it was only when people took them to court that sometimes they fell foul of the thing.

The contest over liberal values within the Directorate and PAB also affected the Chairman of the PAB, Kobus Van Rooyen. He described his appointment to his position as Chairman:

I never regarded myself as a representative of government. I thoroughly believed in the independence of the PAB. It is meant to be independent. Where one did ban some of the songs, you would find it was more or less in the earlier days of the '80s, if you look at the developments over the years. Take a thing like a *Rat in the kitchen* was found to be not undesirable. The songs had to be in a sense pro-violence or pro-revolutionary. In fact that is why we dealt with so few of these songs because we were so open-minded and there weren't many appeals on this. I think "Another Brick in the Wall", had it come before us again, we would have unbanned it. But it was unbanned at the first level when it was resubmitted. You always have that resubmission. So, how does one feel? Well, obviously you feel sad about it when looking back but you must be realistic here. You have just started as a new Chair of a system in 1980. You are quite young. You are 37. You have got so many problems on hand. You have got a long list of banned books: black writers/white writers, classics ... So you are so busy trying to develop and [unban this material] when you have made errors you are sad about it, but you are so happy that you are getting on and passing 'Staffrider' and 'New Nation' and 'South' that you may not lie awake about having then made a mistake on 'Another Brick in the Wall'. It was such a huge mistake because in law you must look at the publication itself.

However, Marcus (in Coetzee, 1996: 194) was sceptical of Van Rooyen's claim to impartiality. Marcus claimed that decisions were often inconsistent with Van Rooyen's

stated guiding principles. He aptly described the censors' commitment to the guiding principles as "fragile". J. M Coetzee (1996: 195) agreed, arguing that in different instances the South African censorship system acted in an authoritarian and impartial manner, making decisions that were clearly not those of an arbiter mediating between competing interests.

Despite the state censors' inconsistent and conservative decisions, there was certainly a trend towards leniency in at least some of its decisions. Consequently, the Directorate and PAB were the sites of frequent contests between the censors and the police and government, a situation indicative of the Directorate and Board's relative autonomy. A clear example of this was the decision by the Directorate not to ban the film *Cry Freedom* (1987). Under appeal, Van Rooyen decided not to ban the film. Consequently the film was banned under the Internal Security Act, and Van Rooyen received death threats, his house was set alight and he was the victim of a variety of other dirty tricks (Interviews with Van Rooyen, 1998 and Erasmus, 2001).

By the late 1980s the Directorate and PAB had become increasingly reluctant to ban material such as Shifty Records' anti-censorship *Forces Favourites* (1985) compilation album forwarded to it by the police. The Board argued that all the lyrics were similar to items one could read about in liberal newspapers (Directorate of Publications, 1987: P87/04/63). In 1988 and 1989 very little music was banned at all (Jacobsens, 1991). Most albums submitted to the Directorate by the police in 1989 were declared 'not undesirable'. These included the controversial *Voëlvy* (1989) compilation album, Sipho Mabuse's *Chant of the Marching* (1989), Koos Kombuis' *Niemandslaan* (1989), and Simple Minds' *Street Fighting Years* (1989).

These contests around what to censor and what not to censor once again reflect the complexity of the official censorship terrain. As outlined in Chapter Two, Foucault (1976: 92) does not assume the sovereignty of the state nor does he accept that it dominates by means of an over-all unity. Rather he views state power as operating through ongoing struggles and confrontations within the state sphere. These struggles throughout the state sphere are "embodied in the state apparatus, in the formulation of the law, in the various social hegemonies" (Foucault, 1976: 93). Furthermore, a neo-Gramscian approach "presents culture, society, and politics as terrains of contestation"

(Kellner, 1995b: 101). The testimonies of various government censorship agents, including Coetzee and Van Rooyen (discussed above, as well as others discussed below) clearly reveal that no area was exempt from contestation. Oppressive structures certainly led to resistance, even by some of the agents whose brief it was to uphold those structures. These examples reveal a complex terrain, in contrast with simplified binary views of struggle whereby state censorship officials operated unquestioningly and consistently according to the state's dictates.

4.3 Security laws

Central to Gramsci's concept of hegemony is the relationship between coercion and persuasion in the maintenance of the dominant discourse. This is clearly borne out in the apartheid state's reliance on the state security apparatus. In addition to the Publications Control Act, the government made use of several security laws (such as the Internal Security Act 74 of 1982 and Protection of Information Acts 84 of 1982) to ban publications. The Internal Security Act 74 of 1982 was a consolidation of various older Acts such as the Suppression of Communism Act 44 of 1950 and the Riotous Assemblies and Suppression of Communism Act 15 of 1954 and the Riotous Assemblies Act 17 of 1956 (Williams and Hackland, 1988: 114). Section 5 of the Act contained sweeping provisions for the prohibition of various publications. It allowed the Minister of Law and Order to ban publications according to a range of criteria. These included publications that were deemed to be a danger to the security of the state or threatened law and order, which promoted or furthered the aims of communism, and which were published or disseminated by or expressed the views of an unlawful organization (Marcus, 1984: 20). Other Acts such as the Protection of Information Act 84 of 1982 and the Defence Act 44 of 1957 also prohibited the publication or recording of certain information. Braam Coetzee (Interview, 1998) explained that:

Under the Internal Security Act, organizations like the ANC, SWAPO (South West African Peoples' Organization), PAC, and many other parties became banned organizations and under the Act all writings or publications emanating from those organizations were automatically banned. So we never looked at them. They were not sent to us but were automatically banned under those laws.

However, any banning not executed through the Directorate had to be defended in a court of law in the case of an appeal. In a court of law proof of evidence was required whereas this was not the case with the PAB. Consequently, to make matters easier, the police often used to try to off-load material onto the Board, which, as indicated, did not automatically ban items submitted to it by the police.

Faced with increased militant resistance, the government declared a State of Emergency in July 1985, effective in parts of the country, especially the Transvaal and the Cape. The Emergency was lifted in March 1986 (Merrett, 1994: 113). However in June 1986 a nationwide State of Emergency was declared, and renewed annually for the next three years. The States of Emergency further empowered the state to ban material and restrict musical performance. The 1986 emergency regulations:

“made it an offence for any person to make, write, record, disseminate, display, utter or even possess a ‘subversive statement’... The most awesome power of censorship was vested in the Commissioner of Police. He was empowered ‘without prior notice to any person and without hearing any person’ to issue an order ‘prohibiting any publication, television recording, film recording or sound recording containing any news, comment or advertisement on or in connection with any matter specified in the order’” (Marcus, 1987: 9).

According to Braam Coetzee (Interview, 1998) the government did make use of these regulations as a ‘parallel system’ to ban material completely independently of the Directorate. Newspapers particularly suffered under the emergency regulations. Newspapers, given their wide readership, were under the constant scrutiny of the police. Recorded music was of less concern to the police, although they frequently submitted copies of controversial albums to the Directorate if they came across them, sometimes a long time after the initial release (Interview with Paul Erasmus, 2001; Directorate of Publications archival files). Reports of censorship always drew more attention to published material than might otherwise have been received, so if something was unlikely to reach more than a marginal audience, the police tended not to draw attention to it. Indeed, the government tried to downplay the extent of censorship in South Africa. For example, in June 1986 in an instance of typical doublespeak, a government

spokesperson pronounced that: "We do not have censorship. What we have is a limitation on what newspapers can report" (in Merrett, 1994: 115).

The scope of the emergency regulations extended beyond published material. The regulations also curtailed freedom of movement (especially in and out of townships) and public gatherings. In terms of Regulation 7 of the Emergency Regulations, events could simply be declared illegal by police authorities without justification. Music concerts and other cultural events were often prohibited as a result. For example, a cultural festival planned to take place in the Western Cape entitled "Towards a peoples culture: Arts Festival '86" was prohibited (see Image 4.1). Acquiring a permit to enter an area and to perform was a difficult and frustrating task, especially given the ad hoc nature in which permits were granted. Individual police officials could decide whether or not an event was acceptable without necessarily having to provide a reason (see Image 4.1). But even when reasons were given, they would often be very vague. Willem Möller (Interview, 1998) of the Gereformeerde (Reformed) Blues Band described the frustration:

To have a concert somewhere, you'd have to get a permit from somebody and it's now Emergency regulations, so some police captain has to approve that this will not disturb the peace. And he says 'no, we think it will disturb the peace', so you can't have your concert in whatever place. That kind of thing happened a lot.

The emergency regulations put police at a localized level in an important position of power over musicians who were at their mercy if they wanted to receive permission to perform. The arbitrary nature of many of the refusals made the regulations very difficult and frustrating to negotiate.

4.3.1 Illegal gatherings

In terms of the Internal Security Act (and also according to the emergency regulations), concerts which did not have a valid permit could be declared illegal gatherings and thus be closed down. Any meeting between two or more people with a common purpose could be declared an illegal gathering. This was part of a nation-wide prohibition on the holding of outdoor gatherings (other than bona fide sports meetings) of two or more people (Marcus, 1987: 9). Emergency regulations also included indoor gatherings. Many live

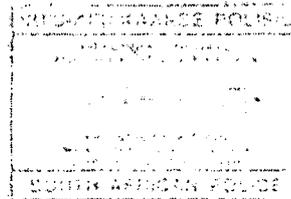


PROHIBITION OF A GATHERING IN TERMS OF REGULATION 7 PROMULGATED
IN TERMS OF THE PUBLIC SAFETY ACT, 1953 (ACT 3 OF 1953), BY
PROCLAMATION R109 OF 1986
(GOVERNMENT GAZETTE NO 10280 DATED 12 JUNE 1986 AS AMENDED)

A State of Emergency has been declared in the Republic of
SOUTH AFRICA in terms of Proclamation R108, 1986 (Government
Gazette No 10279 dated 12 June 1986).

By virtue of the powers vested in me by Regulation 7 of the
Regulations in terms of Proclamation R109 of 12 June 1986,
as amended, I Christoffel Antonie SWART, Divisional Commissioner
of the South African Police for the WESTERN PROVINCE DIVISION
hereby prohibit the ARTS FESTIVAL COMMITTEE, to hold a
Cultural Festival as advertised in the programme entitled
"TOWARDS A PEOPLES CULTURE : ARTS FESTIVAL 86", in or at
any place within the WESTERN PROVINCE DIVISION of the South
African Police at any time from 12 December 1986 until
22 December 1986.

Signed at CAPE TOWN on the 11th day of December 1986.



C. A. Swart

DIVISIONAL COMMISSIONER : WESTERN PROVINCE DIVISION
C A SWART

MAJ-GEN

Image 4. 1 Prohibition of a cultural event in terms of State of Emergency regulations.

Most musicians viewed as political by the police, were at one time or another affected by permit requirements, an overt method of controlling the movement and mixing of people of different races. Johnny Clegg (Interview, 1998) provided an example of the difficulties experienced by musicians who did not have permits. He related how his group, Juluka, often experienced difficulties when performing at township concerts without permits:

Shows were closed down by the police. You know, you had to get a permit as a white person to go into townships. So they would ask us for a permit, we had no permits, so then the promoter would get into trouble and they'd close the show down. We had some really rough moments. Some of the shows were closed down with dogs and tear gas. We had one thing in Nigel, in Daduza Township, in the middle of the songs – we were playing the stage in full cry. Three policemen with shotguns came onto stage in camouflaged uniforms and stood there. And then a guy came out and grabbed the microphone and said 'that's it, the shows over'. And we were really angry because it was just such a provocative and scary moment for everybody.

Security legislation undoubtedly led to many instances in which musicians were silenced by being prevented from performing in particular areas under certain circumstances. On occasion the bureaucratic wrangling involved in organizing a concert put musicians off even trying to arrange performances in certain areas. At other times, as Clegg's account reveals, musicians who decided to go ahead and perform without a permit were prevented from performing or had their performances stopped midway. It was very unlikely that local police officials would grant permits for performances that they suspected had any political links.

4.4 Local authorities and pressure groups

National legislation was not the only means by which live performances could be prohibited or interfered with. Local councils could also pass legislation at a municipal level, dictating the terms on which performances were allowed to take place. Certainly, local authorities did occasionally step in to prevent music from being performed, emphasizing the need to consider the local in conjunction with the national (centralized) level (Foucault, 1976: 93). Given that local political dynamics were paramount in such

cases, conservative councils almost always put restrictions into place. An extreme example once again involves Juluka who were banned from performing in Pietersburg, a town run by a right-wing town council. The group comprised members of different races, wearing animal skins, beads and bangles, doing Zulu dance and stick fighting to heavy drum beats, singing in Zulu and English, offering a strong image of what white band leader Johnny Clegg (Interview, 1998) refers to as 'the secret of Zulu masculinity'. Clegg in particular created a fascination for a conservative audience, as a white who had crossed over to 'the other'.

The effect of Clegg's otherness on the 'civilized' local audiences obviously shocked the elders of Pietersburg. Clegg described how:

the issue of cultural mixing came to a head for us when we were banned from Pietersburg. The Pietersburg Town Council banned Juluka. And they said that we were engaged in 'bastardizing' Western culture by mixing it with African culture, and the two cultures should not be allowed to be promoted. And that became a theme of some of the more conservative attacks against what we were doing. And it was clearly a political thing for them. For them what we were doing was down the line a political act against cultural segregation, against the whole idea of separate cultures and all that stuff.

In a similarly bizarre circumstance, the white crossover band, Hotline were informed by the right wing Lichtenburg Town Council that they could only perform to a mixed race audience (a precondition of the band) if the audience was segregated. A fence was placed down the middle of the field with whites on one side and blacks on the other. The band moved their gear over to the black side and went ahead with the gig! (Interview with Alistair Coakley, 1998).

In November 1980 Jonathan Handley of the Radio Rats and editor of the Palladium Fanzine organized the 'Power of Youth' charity concert comprising black and white bands for a multiracial audience. However, the Springs Town Council applied local by-laws to ban the concert unless the audience constituted whites only, although bands of different races were permitted. In the council's defence Mr Tonk Meter, Chairman of the management committee, said that:

"We've gone as far as we can at present. If Handley wants to hold a multiracial concert then let him hold it in the Kwa Thema hall. The Black people have their own facilities there and should use them" (Sunday Express, 1980: 12).

Handley cancelled the concert on principle. He explained that:

"I have no intention of entering into some political wrangle with the Springs Town Council – if they don't want me to hold a multiracial concert then so be it. But I'll be damned if I'm going to embarrass the Black performers by asking them to perform in front of a wholly White audience" (Sunday Express, November 16 1980: 12).

He added that: "It would be difficult for white fans to get permits to go to Kwa Thema and in any case, it is too late to book the hall" (Sunday Express, 1980:12). In a despondent and angry Palladium (December 1980: 3) editorial after the council decision, Handley commented that:

"Power of Youth 1980 has been cancelled. Reasons? Politico-personal. However, all the field marshalls (sic) have gathered in the tatty tent, and decided to postpone the desert campaign until 1981. Venue: Springs Civic Centre. Still in aid of T.E.A.C.H.E.R. and S.P.C.A. Still hoping for a multicultural cast and audience – permits permitting. It's still only rock and roll – nothing else. Won't they understand this?"

The point was that such events were not just rock and roll for authorities determined to protect the sanctity of racial separation and Nationalist rule. The politics of the events meant that music performances needed to be stopped. This also happened in 1983 when a concert entitled "Rock for a reason" was to be hosted by JODAC (Johannesburg Democratic Action Committee) on the 1st December at Selborne Hall in Johannesburg. The concert was cancelled because the Johannesburg City Council refused permission to use the hall. The planned concert line-up included Sakhile, Malombo, the Bosmont Trio, Jessica and Badire" (Poster Collective, 1991:164).

A significant case of local politicians throughout South Africa reacting to music in a similar fashion occurred in 1988 when the anti-establishment Afrikaner Voëlvry tour travelled around the country. The organizers and performers made a point of going to small as well as large urban areas. Apart from experiencing right wing intimidation in

general, they ran into problems with some town councils and university administrations who would not allow them to perform in council, school and university venues (Interviews with Kerkorrel, 1998 and Möller, 1998). These included the Rand Afrikaans University, the University of Potchefstroom, the Vaal Triangle Technikon, the University of Stellenbosch and Frans Cronje Hall in Bloemfontein. The grounds of refusal were that the music was too subversive and dangerous. Johannes Kerkorrel (Interview, 1998) believed that the fact that the tour was an Afrikaans tour was the main threat to authorities:

I thought that the greatest threat we posed at the time was the fact that we protested against the state and against policies of the National Party. And especially the Apartheid policies and because we did it in Afrikaans that is why they reacted so violently against us. Like sending the Security Police to our gigs and sabotaging us and banning our concerts and banning the records. I thought that was because we dared to voice our opposition in Afrikaans.

Local Afrikaans authorities did not want Afrikaans youth to realize that there were Afrikaners opposed to the apartheid system and Nationalist government. Indeed some Afrikaans schools in the Orange Free State forbade attendance of the Voëlvry concert on the basis that it was 'evil' and 'communistic' (Financial Mail, 1988: 11).

The various ways in which national and local politics led to musicians being barred from performing unhindered in many venues emphasizes once again the manner in which censorship has to do with controlling spaces. Physical spaces were controlled in an attempt to prevent South Africans from hearing and seeing musicians perform music undermining of apartheid discourse. By sometimes referring to 'subversive' music as 'communist', the connection between apartheid politics and Christianity was once again evoked, in line with the hegemonic coalition between the government and religious groups. Accordingly, protective borders (physical and symbolic) had to be erected to keep the communist menace from infiltrating local and national spaces and challenging Christian values. Indeed, former security branch policeman, Paul Erasmus (interview, 2001) revealed that some of their mentors at training college linked South Africa's moral and political problems to communism:

They linked everything to communism. The corruption of moral fibre of the Western world was the communists – who were behind it. Pornography was communist, drugs was communist, long hair was communist, everything was communist.

Communism was seen to be behind the struggle to end apartheid, and so any attempt to break down apartheid barriers was viewed as communist. The fight against communism can therefore be viewed as the cornerstone of the government's attempt to lend legitimacy to its hegemonic project. Any activity that undermined the dominant apartheid discourse was prohibited as (at least indirectly) supporting communism. In contrast apartheid was maintained at all costs. The SADF protected South Africa from the 'total communist onslaught' on the geographic borders of the country, trying to protect apartheid space. In the meantime, racial segregation forged a division between white and black spaces: whites could occupy spaces that blacks could not. Whites could only occupy black spaces with a permit. Blacks could only occupy white spaces at particular times under certain conditions. Otherwise people could only occupy such spaces illegally, thus making them dangerous spaces. Dangerous spaces were dangerous largely because of the police. Kerkorrel's quote (above) integrally links venue restrictions and album censorship to police harassment. This link is crucial if one is to grasp the power of South African censorship.

4.5 Police repression and intimidation

Indeed, repression was used alongside legislative measures to prevent musicians from recording or performing controversial music. Sometimes this was done overtly, as happened to Roger Lucey, who was targeted by the security branch. Security police monitoring Voice of America (VOA) heard an interview with Lucey and some of his songs performed live on a VOA programme. They forwarded a recording of the programme to Security Branch Head Office who assigned security policeman Paul Erasmus to the case. Erasmus was instructed to put an end to Lucey's career. Lucey's music was banned, his record company, 3rd Ear Music, was threatened, as was the distributing company, WEA. Erasmus set about disrupting live shows by pouring teargas powder into the air-conditioning system and threatening venue owners, telling them not

to renew their contract with Lucey. The security police bugged Lucey's phone and intercepted his mail, thus finding out about future gigs, and putting an end to them in a similar manner (Mail and Guardian, July 1995, Interview with Erasmus, 2001). Roger Lucey (Interview 1998) recalled how:

We were playing and we were just getting harassed. We would arrive at a gig and the manager would say to us, 'No, you're not playing tonight'. And we'd say, 'What are you talking about?' and he would say, 'No, there seems to be some misunderstanding, you're not on tonight'. And that would be it. That would be the end of the story. We'd arrive at a festival we were booked to play at. And the guys would say 'You're not on'. You know we'd have a contract. And you'd try to find the guy who's contracted us and everyone's just scuttling around and nobody's there to take responsibility. And it happened over and over and over again. And when we did get little gigs ... they basically shut us down ... They did a couple of nasty things like the teargas in the air-condition systems and that sort of stuff. And I mean eventually we just got shut out. [But] I think the worst was the invasion of my private property – my house, my home. And that happened on a number of occasions, where I'd wake up in the middle of the night and my house would be full of fully armed policemen.

Paul Erasmus (Interview, 2002) concurred with Roger Lucey's versions of events. He related how in Lucey's case:

The whole security monitoring apparatus came into effect. Firstly, we had the informer network. Most anti-government organizations were totally infiltrated so we'd get information from human intelligence sources. Secondly, ... Roger's telephone was monitored, as were other people in the industry or in the segment that he was part of. So we knew after that if there were shows coming up or he'd been booked or he was going to appear at whatever place. It was a simple matter then, of using this incident as a sort of threatening stick with the next venue. I can't even remember how many places I've phoned and said, 'Look, I understand that so and so is booked to perform here, Roger Lucey. I'm from Scorpio...' (the organization that we used for all these activities was a body that I constructed

called Scorpio) ... 'If you let that bastard, Lucey, that terrorist, Lucey, play we're going to blow the place up!'

Erasmus has kept his casebooks and they include numerous entries involving Roger Lucey. These include monitoring a concert at His Majesty's theatre in Commissioner Street, Johannesburg and noting an article about Roger Lucey in the liberal Rand Daily Mail newspaper (see Image 4.3).

Datum ontvang Date received	Verwysingsnommer Reference number	Van waar ontvang From where received	Nature of enquiry	Datum S.A.P. 67 ingedien Date S.A.P. 67 submitted	Datum en wyse van afhandeling Date and manner of disposal
79-06-25	WA/UP/13/A/104/12	LOCAL	"FORTY PERCENTERS" MEETING - COMMITTEE IN EDENBURG	67 ON	79-06-26
79-06-25	WA/UP/1/A/4544	LOCAL	ROGER LUCEY - REPORT IN RAND DAILY MAIL	67 ON	79-06-26
79-06-25	WA/UP/13/A/104/12	LOCAL	C. PARAGWANATH. LETTER IN "THE STAR" 79-06-25.	67 ON	79-06-26
79-06-26	WA/UP/13/A/104/12	LOCAL	"FORTY PERCENTERS" FILES RECEIVED FROM SOURCE.	67 ON	79-07-03
79-06-28	WA/UP/1/A/4544	LOCAL	ROGER LUCEY SHOW AT HIS MAJESTY'S THEATRE	67 ON	79-07-17
79-06-30	WA/UP/12/A/106(23)	LOCAL	YOUTH FOR PEACE MEETING AT 13 th STREET, PAGELVIEW.	67 ON	79-07-10

Image 4.3 An excerpt from one of Paul Erasmus' casebooks indicating that security reports (Codename SAP 67) on Roger Lucey were sent to Security Branch Head Office on specific dates.

Erasmus's casebooks also reveal that he was assigned the task of checking up on a number of musicians during his time in the security branch, these included Umfondosa, eVoid (who were dismissed as being apolitical), Juluka, Savuka and Manalala. Sometimes all Erasmus needed to do was attend a concert and write a brief report (Interview with Erasmus, 2001).

Another musician to be severely harassed by the police was poet Mzwakhe Mbuli who put his poetry to music. He was the victim of even more serious attacks. Mbuli (Postal questionnaire, 1998) explained that:

Besides the fact that my music was banned, I was also detained, tortured and my home hit with hand grenades. I survived assassination attempts and was shot at by white occupants of unmarked motor vehicles. Refused to travel abroad, my passport applications often turned down by Home Affairs Department.

An Index on Censorship (1987: 38) report confirmed that Mbuli was detained in 1987 after being forced to live underground for many months prior to that. He spent six months in detention but no charges were brought against him. It was also reported (Index on Censorship, 1989: 39) that on the 3rd of August 1989 a hand grenade was thrown at his house. His wife and three-year-old child were at home but were not injured.

In Grahamstown, a riot policeman shot and killed seventeen year old Mngcini Mginywa at a funeral because, according to the policeman, the people "were singing in their own language and this causes riots" (Gwangwa and Van Aurich, 1989: 146), while in 1983 two members of the reggae group Splash – Joseph Charles and Rufus Radebe – were sentenced to effective four-year prison terms (later reduced to 17 months) for singing 'revolutionary songs' at a Wits Free People's Concert in 1984. One of the songs was a cover of Steel Pulse's "A Tribute to Martyrs", which included a reference to Nelson Mandela (Index on Censorship, 1983: 47 and 1984:43; Kerkhof 1986: 29).

The police closely monitored the Voelvry tour. One of the central musicians involved in the tour, Johannes Kerkorrel (Interview, 1998), discussed how:

We had a gig in the Town Hall in George and that is the constituency of P. W. Botha. While we were playing there, even before we started playing there were stink bombs. Somebody had thrown two stink bombs and a very itchy kind of powder which made people sneeze. It was very difficult for us to play there but we went ahead and we played. It took a while for the hall to clear and then when we got outside we saw that the tyres of the Kombis was slashed. Then we kind of thought, well, if he (P. W.) didn't intervene, certainly then his Lieutenants or those people ... I will never know for sure. I never had that confirmed that it came from him but we had lots of problems with the Security Police.

Musician Keith Berelowitz (Interview, 1998) related a further story about police intimidation. He remembered:

playing at Durban at Kings Park Stadium where the police actually attacked the drummer of the Asylum Kids while he was on stage. I mean they actually went onto the stage with batons ... and the police charged the stage and I remember seeing Steve Howells running up the back of the stage which was empty with the police after him. And I actually couldn't believe this. To me it was absolutely indescribable ... that incident with Steve being chased by the police, it will be in my mind forever. It was actually quite a frightening thing to see.

In the mid-'80s the police barged in on a Dynamics performance at a digs in Johannesburg, putting an end to the concert (see Image 4.4). According to band member,



Image 4.4 The South African Police disrupt a Dynamics gig (Photographer unknown, Jimmy Florence archives 1983-4).

Jimmy Florence, the police said that the concert was too loud. However, the group included black and white members and were firm in their political stance, so the reasons were hazy. However, what is clear was that the police were available and willing to intervene when necessary, something that musicians were very aware of.

Depending on local circumstances, police would also specifically target mixed and/or alternative venues like Scratch in Cape Town, which was open to all races and played a lot of resistance and other alternative music. Journalist Steve Gordon (Interview, 2001) described how numerous:

regulations and statutes were thrown at that venue, that ranged from orderly movement and settlement of black persons (which was being used to physically stop people coming into Cape Town station to go the venue. People were physically being put back on the train, in '79-'80), to obviously narcotics, obviously the immorality act (because you had mixed couples or people just getting down together, or whatever), to security branch who would try to investigate lyrics. It varied. I remember on one occasion at twelve o'clock on Saturday hordes of police came storming into the venue and said that it was the Sunday's Observance Act. And if it wasn't the Sunday's Observance Act it was something else ... It translated to disruption at the level of charges and court proceedings on really petty things like trading after twelve o'clock on a Saturday, normal bureaucratic blocking and stalling, to brutal assaults on people, you know beating up people, plain clothes cops around the corner snatching people and riding them off in a police van and roughing them up, baton assaults ... coming in and pulling records off turntables and jumping on them. Jumping on records with great relish!

Yet not all police were out to harass musicians or prevent performances. Even within police ranks there was not a complete willingness to regard musicians negatively. Dizu Plaatjies of Amampondo (Interview, 1999) experienced situations in which sympathetic policemen assisted the group in avoiding harassment because they were fans of their music:

We were friends of everybody – police and so on. I remember in the roadblocks sometimes, when we had to travel with our instruments, and the people when they asked 'Who are you?' and so we said 'Amampondo'. 'Oh, let Amampondo go'. Black and white, policemen ...

Likewise, Renee Veldsman of Via Afrika (Interview, 1998) revealed that:

We did have quite a few policeman fans though. They used to get us out of a sticky situation every now and again which was quite great ... Via Afrika were very protected when we went into Soweto.

Also referring to the police in a positive manner, Brenda Fassie (1998) claimed that:

They loved me. Fortunately or unfortunately for me. I don't want say bad things about white policemen, really, some of them they loved my music and I never had a problem ... I had friends amongst them.

These experiences indicate that even within the ranks of the repressive apparatus of the apartheid state there were police who did not systematically take a hard line towards liberal musicians. Although it needs to be noted that the musicians discussed above were not severe critics of the state through their music, but at times they did engage in mild protest. Johnny Clegg (Interview, 1998) summed-up the situation, pointing out that

There were small little cultural spaces that did exist in South Africa at that time, but they were all behind the scenes, and if you were prepared to go and dig them out. And there was a kind of an attitude by some of the security police, that if you did it in the townships, you know, and you weren't causing trouble, and you weren't making fiery political speeches from the stage, they would turn a blind eye.

Indeed Lee Edwards (Interview, 1998) of the Cherry Faced Lurchers thought that the influence and impact of the band on a potential audience was also important in determining the extent of police harassment. As he suggested:

I think we certainly were not big enough to be perceived as a huge threat. They must have looked at the lyrics. But I think by the mid to late eighties that they had come to a decision of letting smaller things happen, and not making a huge thing out of them, because the publicity they knew was more adverse to their cause than good.

Certainly, Paul Erasmus (Interview, 2001) indicated that in the mid-to-late 1980s even a popular band like Savuka was left alone, rather than overtly interfered with, because of the international attention state repression would attract. Erasmus (Interview, 2001) explained that:

Their profile was too high. Can you imagine? When were they so popular in France? Est Zulu Blanc, I remember. That would have caused a huge stink. I think then the security establishment were moving away from the heavy-handed type of approach of maybe the late '70s or early '80s and being more sort of circumspect, you know, rather leave these okes.

Erasmus's insights certainly confirm Lee and Clegg's view that there was space between a forceful confrontational approach and complete silence, which could be exploited by musicians. The issue of resistance through performance is dealt with in Chapter Eight, but for now it is useful to consider performance spaces as contested terrains (quite literally) where an intricate struggle took place over what could be said, what would be allowed, what was forbidden, and what would be stopped. The police were waiting in the wings, ready to step in when the need arose (see Image 4.5).

The extent and nature of police repression of popular musicians and their music in the South African context confirms the argument posited in the second chapter that the extent of direct coercion in South Africa was far greater than that of the western democracies Gramsci considered. For example, the antics of the police discussed here are in stark contrast to the far more limited police involvement in Britain between 1967 and 1992 (see Cloonan, 1996). Furthermore, police repression here is far more obviously concerned with racial inequality and segregation than with solely maintaining capitalism. This becomes even more obvious when considering the racist laws which formed the basis of apartheid legislature (see discussion below).

4.6 General apartheid laws

While the focus so far has been on fairly direct mechanisms of government censorship and harassment, Brink (in Stewart, 1990: 17) crucially argued that in South Africa:

“Censorship is only one part of an overall strategy which also expresses itself in such forms as detention without trial, arbitrary bannings, job reservations, the Group Areas Act, ...influx control, the frustration of black solidarity and stripping 9 million black South Africans of their citizenship through the creation of a mosaic of ‘independent homelands’, the web of legislation controlling the press, and all the awesome secret activities of the Secret Police”.

The police used an array of apartheid laws to harass South Africans, blacks in particular. Many of these laws were concerned with protecting spatial segregation: keeping blacks out of white spaces, whites out of black spaces and discouraging places of racial integration. Apartheid discourse was so engrained in the thinking of the police and military that they could just not make sense of black and white South Africans mixing together socially or travelling together in the same vehicle. Apartheid thinking perceived racial separation as so natural that any integration was regarded as abnormal, a threat to 'normal life'. This inability to grasp racial integration is patently captured by Johnny Clegg (Interview, 1998) who described how, in his youth, he was apprehended by the



Image 4. 5 South African Police surveillance at a Corporal Punishment concert (Photograph: Robbie Bishop, late 1970s).

police while frequenting a mining hostel for migrant workers:

- I was arrested at about fifteen at Wemmer Hostel in the middle of a room of dancers: sixty or seventy dancers with upturned beds so that they could make space to dance. And the police raided the hostel on that Sunday, and they came in. They thought I'd been kidnapped: 'Are you alright, are you alright?' I said, 'No I'm fine. I'm here learning to dance'. And they couldn't actually put it together. They couldn't get their heads around it.

Apartheid laws were often applied to musicians, sometimes deliberately because they were musicians but most of the time as a part of abnormal life under apartheid. The most common of these were arrests for pass law offences and being stopped at security roadblocks. Accounts provided by Sipho Gumede and Sipho Mabuse referred to in Chapter One illustrate the humiliating and difficult circumstances faced by musicians trying to perform in the context of pass laws and curfew restrictions. If a vehicle was stopped at a roadblock and there were black and white occupants travelling together it caused great consternation for officials. Such racial integration was an affront to the officials' apartheid beliefs; they could not understand or tolerate it. The police would harass musicians at roadblocks, taking hours to search musicians' vehicles at roadblocks. Johnny Clegg (Interview, 1998) described how:

The police would stop us at roadblocks and they would see it was us. And then they would say 'empty out the truck' because we had a three and a half-ton truck with all the sound equipment. So we'd empty out the truck and they'd make us late for the gig. You know, all that kind of stuff, which we put up with because we didn't know better ... You know, because you must realize that to be a rock musician or a musician in the '60s and '70s in South Africa, you were one step away from being regarded as a communist. If you had long hair then you were a communist!

Living under these conditions made it difficult for musicians who had to be constantly aware of possible police roadblocks while travelling to concerts. They had to learn how to deal with the constant harassment. Jimmy Florence (Interview, 1998) of the mixed racial group The Dynamics, described how roadblocks played on their minds:

If you went on tour, you had to keep your eyes peeled because now there were black and white guys in a kombi with musical instruments, and you were driving through the Free State to get to Cape Town. I mean it was a nerve-racking ordeal, having to deal with shit that's unnecessary and created by someone else's paranoia.

Musicians of different races travelling together always caught the attention of police at roadblocks. Sipho Mabuse (Interview, 1998) recalled that in the early 1980s their all-black group Harari had a white woman as manager. She used to travel to concerts with

them. Her presence was often met with apprehension by the police. Mabuse described how:

One time we came back from a show and we had to drop some of the musicians in Soweto, and I took her into town. And there was a roadblock just as we were coming out of Soweto. You should have seen how all these cops just converged on the car. And they asked me, 'And you're with the madam at this time?' I said 'No, I'm taking her to her place. We were just going in there to drop off some of the musicians. It was naturally this direction we had to take'. And they went to her and said 'Do you realize that you have just broken the law?' And she kept quiet. I remember she took out a cigarette and started lighting her cigarette. And he said, 'Do you know that you could be arrested for this?' She said, 'I was not even aware that I had broken the law because I didn't sleep in Soweto, I was just driving out'. And these guys said 'Next time you come here, we'll lock you up and maybe even throw the key away. Are you aware that there's a war in this country?'

Jannie van Tonder (Interview, 1998), as the only white member of the African Jazz Pioneers experienced similar reactions when they were on tour, especially on entering or leaving a black township at night:

With the Pioneers we weren't really causing trouble ... We used to make a living out of playing at birthday parties at larney white country club kind of events, with fancy bouquet five star dinners, and we'd eat in the kitchen. And then afterwards you'd go home and you'd have to drop people off in Soweto and in Alex. Particularly at the time when I was in the band which was about '86 going into '87 we'd be virtually guaranteed every night on our way to get harassed, just because we were on the road. Like going into the township or coming out of the township there'd be a roadblock. And then the question would be, 'Who're you? Where're you going?' ... And then they'd stick their head in the car and check everything out, or they'd ruk [drag] everybody out the car and the next thing they'd want to know is 'What the fuck is this young whitie doing with you okes? You must be up to something'.

In 1979 Lesotho-based band Sankomota were actually banned from performing in South Africa after being stopped at a roadblock. Band member Tsepo Tshola (Interview, 1998) discussed how:

We got banned in South Africa after about four concerts because we were scheduled for twenty concerts. On the fourth one they told us to quit. We were actually blocked on a road towards a show that was going to be in Vereeniging. On the road from Soweto to Vereeniging we were stopped. It was a roadblock and they stopped the whole concert, the whole tour.

Apartheid laws directly affected performances, especially laws to do with racial segregation. The problem of mixed racial audiences has already been considered, as has the situation of groups with members of different races travelling together. In the 1970s it had even been illegal for musicians of different races to perform together on the same stage. In a bizarre case of controlled spaces under apartheid, Julian Laxton (Interview, 1998) revealed how in the early 1970s his multiracial band Hawk were affected:

Before we went to England for our very last series of concerts the band, the black guys who were with us – you know there were four of them – had to perform behind the curtain. You know, literally they had to perform behind the curtain, they weren't allowed to play on the stage with us.

This was even a problem for some bands into the 1980s. Keith Berelowitz (Interview, 1998) of Flash Harry explained that:

We had a black keyboard player at one stage, but he could only do the university gigs with us. I mean what a terrible situation to be faced with, especially when you're in your twenties and you're pretty young and you're influenced by things and you can't understand this. You want to go for a drink with the guy after the gig and you can't, etcetera. So I think it was rough. It was very, very rough, because all we wanted to do at the end of the day was make music.

General apartheid laws affected musicians in a myriad of ways. On one occasion Harari arrived late for a gig in Gabarone after battling to get travel documents so that they could perform in neighbouring Botswana (Interview with Siphon Mabuse, 1998). Steve Gordon (1997: 5) illustrates what was a common form of police harassment of black musicians whereby they were told to play music to the police to prove their musicianship. In one

instance, jazz musician Kippie Moeketsi was arrested for being in a venue where illegal alcohol was being sold. At the police station he was asked to play a piece of music. In an act of subliminal defiance he played 'Don't fence me in'. They responded: 'Jy speel lekker, man. Hardloop!' (You play well man, push off!).

Madala Kunene (Interview, 1998) revealed how the combination of police racism and intimidation severely affected his band in the mid-1980s:

One time when we were rehearsing inside in the room ... the police come and they say, 'You make noise here'. We say, 'No we don't make noise here, you will hear the music, because we like music'. And then the police say, 'You can't play here, you are making noise because other people don't like what you're doing'. We say, 'Oh, it is the daytime, it is not in the night'. And then that time another one say, 'You, you got cheeky'. We say, 'No, not cheeky'. And then they just break, and just demolish the instruments. We just end up with no instruments ... You can't do nothing, you can't go and report. Where are you going to go and report?

Relentless police intimidation and application of apartheid laws to black musicians (in particular) emphasizes the state's constant attempts to contain South Africans within the framework of apartheid segregation and inequality. Black musicians were treated as inferior by paternalistic police who arrogantly 'put them in their place', framing them as the inferior other according to the dominating discourse.

4.7 South African Broadcasting Corporation Radio

Despite the direct government censorship measures discussed so far, fewer⁴ than 100 pieces of music were banned in the 1980s by the Directorate of Publications or by other government agencies through the use of alternative security mechanisms (Jacobsens, 1991: XLIX-LIV). In general, most local recorded political music was not very popular and sales very rarely reached more than one or two thousand copies. Lloyd Ross (Interview, 1998), who ran the oppositional independent Shifty Records, commented that:

If we'd been selling more records we might have had more response.

In agreement with this sentiment, Warrick Sony (1991: 115) argued that:

“One of the key reasons that the state unbanned my fourth LP ‘Beachbomb’ was the fact that I never sold more than one thousand copies of any of my records. If the system works on its own there is no need to ban records or anything”.

The system to which Sony referred was a combination of radio play, record company and retail support. This was where the role of the state-owned SABC came into play. In the 1980s virtually all radio stations were owned by the SABC, which gave it extensive control over what South Africans were able to listen to. The SABC made use of a rigorous system to vet all music played on any of its stations. As prominent SABC announcer and deejay Chris Prior (Interview, 1998) simply commented about SABC policy:

Censorship was a fact of life.

It was a way of life taken very seriously by the SABC censors, protecting the dominant discourse. For apartheid-era SABC music censor, Cecile Pracher (in Reitov, 1998: 85) apartheid discourse had become “a frame of mind; it was comfortable”, promoting a society in which different races “were totally separated, each of us on our own little island”. In line with this way of thinking, the SABC censors took it upon themselves to protect their racial superiority, preventing music from threatening that separation. They scrutinized records, in an attempt to regulate what could be heard on SABC radio by whom and under what conditions. Many songs were barred from airplay, thus preventing them from becoming mass media (Cloonan, 2003: 19).

4.7.1 Censorship procedures

An all-white SABC committee regularly held ‘record meetings’ to scrutinize the lyrics of all music submitted to the SABC for airplay (lyric sheets had to be submitted with music). This committee prohibited thousands of songs from airplay. Sometimes the entire repertoire of a group or solo artist would be restricted from airplay, for example the Beatles because of John Lennon’s ‘More popular than Jesus’ statement and Stevie Wonder, after he dedicated his Oscar award to Nelson Mandela. However, during the period of Wonder’s ban on SABC (which lasted about six months), Wonder appeared on the USA for Africa ‘We are the World’ single. Disc jockeys were allowed to play the

song, but were told not to mention Wonder's contribution (Sunday Times, 1 September 1985).

Once a song was denied airplay on SABC, 'Avoid' was written or a 'To be avoided' sticker was placed alongside the song title on the sleeve of the SABC's copy or copies of the album (see Image 4.6). Former Music Manager of the SABC Commercial Services, Tinus Esterhuizen (Interview, 1998), described the process involved in a song being played (or not being played) on SABC radio:

Number one they (the record company representative) would sample the record library. Number two they would sample the individual compilers and also they would sample the individual announcers who were on their list at the time. In



Image 4. 6 An SABC copy of Miriam Makeba's *Welela* album.

those days there was a committee. What happened was when a record was submitted, if there was anything objectionable it would be referred to a listening panel who would let's say once every two or three weeks listen and then approve or not approve the particular track. It was then marked. When there was doubt at the beginning they used to mark 'Do not play'. And then when the official thing came down, then we just changed the 'Do not play' to 'Avoid'.

On the Afrikaans/English bilingual station, Springbok Radio, rigid control over what presenters played was enforced through the submission of play-lists. Tinus Esterhuizen (Interview, 1998) revealed that:

You had to give your details in before the time so that a change could be made if the music was not suitable or a banned record slipped through or something in bad taste...so we always knew in advance by about two or three days what was going to be played.

If disc jockeys nevertheless played a song marked 'Avoid' Tinus Esterhuizen (Interview, 1998), explained that they:

were reprimanded. In Springbok Radio days they were verbally reprimanded usually, they were very strict in those days.

In addition to the 'avoid' labels and scratched out title, the vinyl itself was defaced: obscenely neat diagonal crosses were often scratched into the vinyl in the middle of condemned tracks, so that the needle would jump if a deejay were to disobey the intention behind the 'Avoid' stickers on the cover. A black producer who at the time preferred to remain anonymous (sited in Marre and Charlton, 1985: 46) described the process in detail:

"They use a thick pen on the cover of the records they send us to obliterate the title itself so we can never see what the original title was. On the actual record, they scoop out the title so it is just not there. On the track, they use a sharp instrument like a knife or razor and cut across it so that when you play it the needle jumps from track to track and you will never understand what it was all about".

The practice of gouging records was most commonly executed on records destined for play on Radio Bantu Stations because black deejays were the most likely to disregard record committee orders (Interview with SABC archivist Cecile Pracher, 2000).

Musicians who came across evidence that their music had been censored by the SABC were shocked by what they saw. Jonathan Handley (Interview, 1998), of the Radio Rats recalled the first time he came across the practice:

I was interviewed by John Berks who was at the time working for Radio 5. But it was when Radio 5 was nothing more than a little hole underground in Auckland Park. And John Berks played "ZX Dan" and I was horrified to see that the rest of the album had been struck out by a grease pencil. So John Berks couldn't play anything else from *Into the Night We Slide* [1978]. He couldn't choose to play another track. You know, he had no freedom of choice.

Likewise, Johannes Kerkorrel (Interview, 1998) found himself in an SABC studio for an interview:

We made an album. After the tour we started recording the album and we put the album out. Then the album was banned for airplay. I think there were two tracks on the album that were allowed. I was in the SABC for an interview and I saw on the back of the album that everything on the album was marked with avoid, avoid, avoid, avoid, avoid.

The censorial act of mutilation was symbolic of the music's position outside the dominant moral/political framework. The authority and will of the censor was indelibly marked on the album, overriding and simultaneously defacing the groove space previously occupied by music deemed to be offensive. Gouging the vinyl ensured that the censored music could never again be played. It is an extreme form of censorship, similar to the burning of Beatles albums and paraphernalia in the bible belt of the United States in the late 1960s (Nuzum, 2001: 225-7), the ritual burning of 'evil' recorded music in churches worldwide, including South Africa (for example the Stirling Full Gospel Church in East London in the early 1980s) and, more recently, the Taliban's physical destruction of musical instruments and music cassettes in Afghanistan (Majrooh, 1998). Indeed, destruction of objects involves a complete denial of space as censors deem particular objects unworthy of occupying any space at all. Furthermore, the black SABC

announcer's description of the censored records (above) reveals that mutilation was also an attempt to deny the existence of musical messages that did not conform to the dominant discourse.

By eliminating the forbidden image, the censor hoped to regulate society through a form of sonic warfare, rigidly setting up cultural boundaries. However, censorship is a sinister display of power:

“that only has the force of the negative on its side, a power to say no; in no condition to produce, capable only of positing limits, it is basically anti-energy. This is the paradox of its effectiveness: it is incapable of doing anything, except to render what it dominates incapable of doing anything either, except for what this power allows it to do ” (Foucault, 1976: 85).

Censorship is certainly a negative, unproductive act. The destructiveness of the act for some might be a triumphant act, symbolic of an ideological victory, but for most the effect is that of futility. Even the censors themselves could not escape the darkness of their actions. SABC records committee member Cecile Pracher (in Reitov, 1998: 85) confessed that it was sometimes painful to ban music, like songs by David Kramer and Anton Goosen. She revealed that she used to censor records at work and then enjoy listening to them at home. On reflection she said that:

“It was playing one role in one place and another somewhere else and not feeling schizophrenic about it. It angers me. The whole conflict of morality and the way it was enforced angers me” (Pracher, in Reitov, 1998: 85).

Paul Erasmus (Interview, 2002) recalls coming home from security branch work and getting pleasure from listening to the very same Roger Lucey music he was so actively repressing through his dirty tricks campaign. He described how:

I secretly became a fan of his, transcribing his music. Sitting for hours, especially after that first Voice of America tape. The quality was very bad. I sat for many, many hours listening, with the rewind button, over and over and over and eventually the music started to get to me. So I enjoyed it and then later on, when I confiscated the batch of records and tapes, I used to play it regularly. Especially I think in sort of depressing moments. You know what was happening in the country wasn't lost on all of us. I mean we weren't totally immune to it.

These moments of public critical self-reflexivity by representatives of the state involved in repressing musical messages are fairly isolated. However, when these moments of reflection did occur, the boundaries erected by the censor began to crack, revealing the destructiveness and ideological instability of their work.

4.7.2 Categories of censorship

Regardless of the professed personal reservations of at least one of its censors, the SABC persevered with a strict form of censorship. Like the Directorate of Publications, the SABC was concerned with political and rebellious messages, blasphemy and overtly sexual lyrics, but it went even further. In supporting the government's system of separate tribes with their independent homelands and separate and pure cultures, no slang or mixing of languages was allowed. The most common categories of censorship are listed below with examples of music banned according to each.

Firstly, many South African songs were banned from airplay because they were deemed rebellious, too political or promoted political struggle (included here were misuse of the national anthem, lyrics which might inflame public opinion or songs which unfairly promoted a political party or movement). Songs that fitted this category included: "Schoolboy" (1981) by the Asylum Kids – it included the chorus "Do you want to be a schoolboy?" with the response being "No"; "Sit Dit Af" ("Turn it off", 1989) by Johannes Kerkorrel and the Gereformeerde Blues Band, an anti-P. W. Botha song; "Shot Down" (1985) by The Cherry Faced Lurchers, "Struggle" (1986) by The Genuines, "Chant" (1989) by Sipho Mabuse, "Jail to Jail" (1989) by Brenda Fassie, "Asimbonanga" (1987) and "One (Hu)man One Vote" (1989) by Savuka, "Behind the bars" (1986) by Mzwakhe Mbuli and many others with similar sentiments (see Image 4.7 for an SABC list of prohibited songs, with further examples).

Secondly, there were also many South African songs banned from airplay for reasons of blasphemy or because the censors decided that the songs were religiously offensive (including promotion of the occult, glorification of the devil or if the lyrics created the impression of a Christ-figure different to Christ). "No Football" (1980) by Flash Harry was an ironic reggae song that protested the fact that it was against the law to play league football on Sunday. The song was banned by the SABC, particularly because of the line

CONFIDENTIAL



S18

HUISHOUDELIKE KORRESPONDENSIE/INTERNAL CORRESPONDENCE

Ons Verw.: JRJ/rjo/HB 2.11

U Verw.:
Your Ref.: _____

AAN: SUPERVISOR: CENTRAL RECORD LIBRARY

DATUM: 2/6/1988

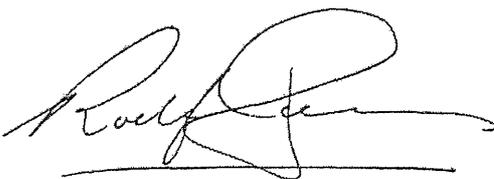
ONDERWERP: RESTRICTED RECORDS : MEMO NO. 253

Kindly note that the undermentioned vocal items MAY NOT BE USED IN ANY PROGRAMME OF THE SABC's SERVICES:

1. TITLE: DEFENDERS OF THE FLAG (B.R. HORNSBY/J. HORNSBY)
ARTIST: BRUCE HORNSBY AND THE RANGE RCA RCAC 1078
LP TITLE: SCENES FROM THE SOUTHSIDE
2. TITLE: CAKE SOME BREAD (J. FERGUSON)
ARTIST: JENNIFER FERGUSON SHIFTY SHIB 23
LP TITLE: HAND AROUND THE HEART
3. TITLE: ~~IN~~ JUDITH ROAD (J. FERGUSON)
ARTIST: JENNIFER FERGUSON SHIFTY SHIB 23
LP TITLE: HAND AROUND THE HEART
4. TITLE: THE BEST THINGS IN LIFE (J. FERGUSON)
COME FREE SHIFTY SHIB 23
ARTIST: JENNIFER FERGUSON
LP TITLE: HAND AROUND THE HEART
5. TITLE: SUBURBIA HUM (J. FERGUSON)
ARTIST: JENNIFER FERGUSON SHIFTY SHIB 23
LP TITLE: HAND AROUND THE HEART
6. TITLE: SET THEM FREE (FORDE/GAYE/ROBINSON/FORDE)
ARTIST: ASWAD ISLAND ILPC 29895
LP TITLE: DISTANT THUNDER

The undermentioned LP MAY NOT BE USED IN ANY PROGRAMME OF THE SABC's SERVICES:

7. LP TITLE: SEVENTH SON OF A SEVENTH SON (EMI EMCJ(L) 7902581
ARTIST: IRON MAIDEN


ROELF JACOBS
CHAIRMAN: RECORD COMMITTEE

Room 601
Ext. 2700

Image 4. 7 List of songs banned by the SABC one week in June 1988 (from the SABC archives).

“More people watch me than go to church” (see Image 4.8). Falling Mirror’s “The Crippled Messiah” (1981) was also prevented from being played on the suspicion that the song was blasphemous. In a further incident Julian Laxton remembers how a Freedom’s Children song was also banned for religious reasons:

One song that I did with Freedom’s Children – it was called “The Kid from Nazareth” – and when it was submitted to radio for airplay, and they heard that track they refused point blank. They said, ‘we can’t do it because it’s blasphemous’. So we had to change the lyric to ‘The Kid from Hazareth’! Which was ridiculous.

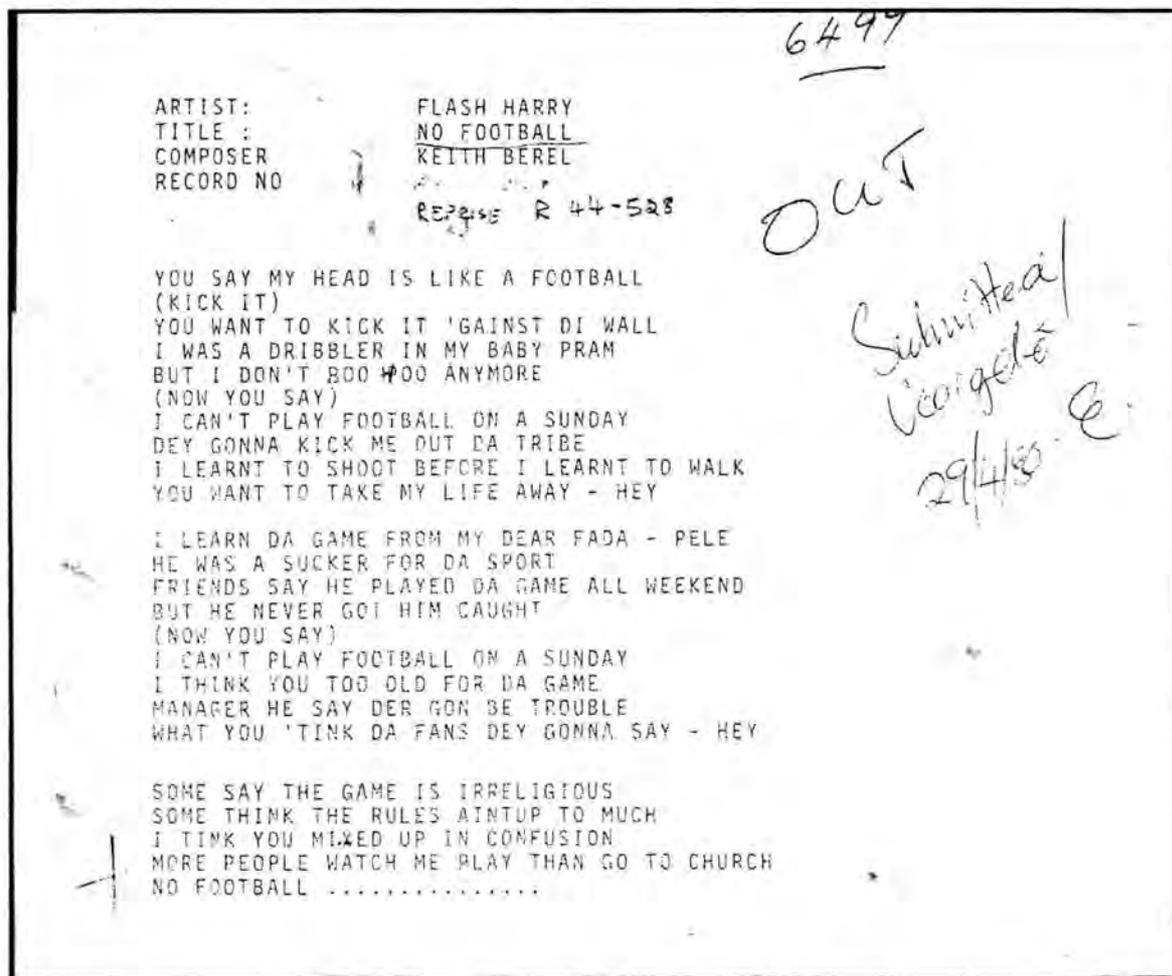


Image 4.8 An SABC censor's copy of the lyrics to Flash Harry's "No Football" (1981).

Thirdly, an overwhelming number of songs were affected by the SABC's prudish approach to sexuality, drug use and swear words and offensive words in general (no qualification was provided on this last category). "Mucking About in the Dungeons All Day" (1978) by the Radio Rats was banned in part because of the word 'Mucking'. The censors also objected to the phrases and lines "Mixing up junk", "He inhales vapours that warp his brain" and "Sin is his principal tool". Other songs to be banned for the above reasons were Bernoldus Niemand's "East Rand Blues" (1984) because of the words 'zol' (marijuana) and 'bliksem' (Afrikaans derogatory slang) and Neil Solomon's "Little Friend" (1981) about a pervert who spied on girls from behind bushes. Also affected were Sipho Mabuse's "Room of Horror" (1989) about a man visiting a prostitute and Edi Niederlander's "Mabel" (1985), a love song for her same-sex lover.

Fourthly, some songs were banned for referring to the brand name of products. This was presumably because such songs constituted free publicity or perhaps sometimes might have led to charges of libel. The Gereformeerde Blues Band had two songs – "BMW" (1989) and "Hillbrow" (1989) banned for this reason. The latter included a number of shop names. The "Worldswagen Medley" (1988) performed by the Worldswagen Cast was also prohibited by the SABC, as were "We are All Castle Drinkers" (1987) and "Ode to Charles Glass" (1987) by Leprechaun, two songs which promoted a local beer.

Fifthly, performers such as Sankomota, David Kramer and Juluka who sang in a variety of languages suffered as a result of the SABC's cultural purity policy. This policy dated back to the Broadcasting Amendment Act 49 of 1960 which almost immediately impacted on the SABC through the establishment of a Bantu Programme Control Board in 1960. It was the task of this whites only Board to set up separate radio stations for each of the major black languages of the South African homelands. The idea was that of "bringing home to the Bantu population that separate development is, in the first place, self-development through the medium of their own language and that, by this means, there will be progress in all spheres of life" (SABC Annual Report of 1967, cited in Hamm, 1995: 194). The SABC was divided into numerous stations which each catered for particular language groups. For example there was an English service, an Afrikaans service and seven Radio Bantu stations, each catering for an 'indigenous bantu' language.

A 1980 Radio Bantu advertisement (in Frederikse 1986: 65) best demonstrates this policy (see Image 4.9), as do the numerous 'ethnic' albums released by record companies to comply with the SABC's format, an example of which is also provided in Image 4.9. In



Image 4.9 Part of the cover of a Badisa 'Sotho vocal' album (left) and an SABC advertisement for Radio Bantu (right), taken from Frederikse (1986: 65).

the former instance, the SABC promoted the idea that Radio Bantu's different ethnic-based stations were a community service, giving everyone the chance to listen to a radio station in one's own language. The divisive and racist (hegemonic) nature of Radio Bantu was literally glossed over. In the latter instance, record companies were able to secure radio play more easily by restricting recording artists to one language only, and then clearly reflecting this information on the album cover. This was done for financial reasons (more of this in Chapter Five) but it also had the effect of perpetuating a central tenet of the government's apartheid policy as practised by Radio Bantu.

SABC language policy was not restricted to Radio Bantu stations. As previously indicated, Springbok Radio broadcast in Afrikaans and English. The station's policy towards black musicians had to fit in with the station's language policy. This meant that only black musicians, who sang in English or Afrikaans, such as singer Margaret Singana, could receive airplay. Esterhuizen (Interview, 1998) stated that:

We played her (Singana) because she was a popular act. But we didn't play ethnic music sung in a black language. But she sang English music and it was popular music of the time.

However, Patrick Van Blerk (Interview, 1998) of independent Jo'burg Records, remembered that to begin with things were not that straight forward. He visited the SABC to promote a Margaret Singana record, and entered through the front door as he always did when promoting a record for airplay on Springbok Radio. Van Blerk revealed that when it became clear that he was promoting a Singana album he was not allowed automatic entry:

I was ordered out of the front door of the SABC and told to go around the corner into Kruis Street and go in through a tiny little single door, which was the Bantu Radio station entrance because she was a black artist. And I went absolutely ballistic and I was called in to the powers that be at that time and I said get out your most recent Springbok Radio Top Twenty. And I proved to them that there was not one but a number of black artists in their charts at that time. The one I remember very distinctly, was Diana Ross. And I said, 'What on God's earth is the difference? There you have a black lady singing a beautiful pop song and she is on your charts. What I have here is a black lady singing a beautiful pop song

who should be on your charts. Why do I have to go in that door and not this door?’

Juluka was one of many groups to suffer under the SABC’s quest for cultural purity and separateness. Johnny Clegg (Interview, 1998) related that:

If you used a word in a song which didn’t belong to the language of the station, it was thrown out. So we had a hit song called ‘Woza Friday’ and it said ‘Woza, woza, Friday my darling.’ Which is adopted from English, you know: ‘Friday my sweetie’. And they sat and they said, ‘look, you know, these are adopted, you could have used a Zulu word for this, and this is an insult to the Zulu people.’ And they gave a whole explanation. White people were telling me this! White people in the Zulu radio, that they couldn’t play it because it would insult the Zulus. The song became a hit without radio play in all the drinking shebeens during the Soweto riots in 1976.

This policy was maintained into the 1980s so that performers such as David Kramer (in particular), who often combined English and Afrikaans lyrics in their songs, repeatedly had songs banned from radio play. Kramer’s manager, Andy Darlington (Interview, 1998) remembered how:

The SABC banned the first album. They restricted it from airplay, which was terrible. He was this wonderful talent and they wouldn’t have it. And I think that one of the reasons was that no one had ever combined English and Afrikaans on song, and they couldn’t deal with this.

Sankomota were also victim to the language purity policy. Lloyd Ross (Interview, 1998) of Shifty Records recalled how:

In the early days we couldn’t get anything played on the radio, not even Sankomota because they didn’t sing in pure Sotho or pure Zulu or pure anything. They sang in the language which people speak of course, and because they mixed songs on the record – they had songs in Swahili, Zulu, Sotho, English – they weren’t allowed to be played on the radio.

Another affected musician was Anton Goosen with his “Boy van die Suburbs” (1979). Goosen (Interview, 1998) objected to the narrow-mindedness of the SABC. He explained:

The title track of the album got banned for a short while because it was street language – Afrikaans and English mixed and not pure.

The rationale behind the separation of all languages, even within music lyrics, on SABC was clearly to serve the government's apartheid ideology. Radio Bantu in particular had been set up to achieve this aim. Merrett (1994: 71) argues that:

“Radio Bantu promoted white hegemony, traditional culture, and homelands and black ethnicity, and was underpinned by the technical limitations of FM broadcasting which favoured regional reception and the targeting of apartheid's ethnic groups”.

These factors made it clear that the SABC's separate stations, its language policy and its music censorship combined to foster imagined sonic spaces in line with the government's division of South Africans along ethnic lines involving group areas and separate 'homelands'. Just like blacks living in white areas were forcibly removed, songs sung in one language could not be played on a different language radio station and songs sung in more than one language completely broke down the strict divisions, so could not be allowed. Moving beyond policies promoting racial and ethnic separation, the SABC's general censorship guidelines, like those of the Directorate, supported the dominant moral/political framework, attempting to keep the airwaves free of lyrical messages and ideas deemed to be marginal. In this way the SABC's rigorous censorship practice perpetuated the Nationalist government's agenda, often without the public being aware of how much they were missing out on, and how much the missing music challenged the reality that was being presented on the SABC's radio stations.

4.7.3 Obscuring the extent of censorship in South Africa

The SABC's relentless attack on the freedom of musicians obscured the extent to which the government was in fact banning a lot of music. The general public was unaware of the extent to which radio play was controlled in this manner, while very little was being directly banned by the Directorate. Indeed, the SABC tried to conceal the fact that it was effectively banning music on the government's behalf, considering that the restriction of a song on the SABC was more or less the death-knell of that song. The attitude of the SABC was aptly captured in a 1989 Sunday Times article which reported that “an SABC

records committee member, Mr Roelf Jacobs, denied that the SABC 'banned' songs. 'We just don't play them' he said" (quoted in Maclennan, 1990: 152). In a documentary film interview in 1981 SABC's Radio 5 Station Manager, Pieter Human (Johnson, 1981), also argued that the SABC did not ban music, because it did not have the power to do so. He said that the SABC simply restricted songs from airplay. This use of government doublespeak to deny censorship practices, as with government statements about emergency regulations, was an attempt to obscure the setting up of boundaries in support of the government's supposedly Calvinist-informed apartheid policies.

As with the Directorate and PAB, the case of the SABC Record Library censors emphasizes the importance of the individuals involved. Whereas the Directorate and PAB were attempting to liberalize the system, the SABC record library censors went to the opposite extreme. As Cecile Pracher, manager of the SABC record library (in Reitov, 1998: 84) stated:

"Many other sections in the SABC, especially the news departments, were highly politicised and often had visits from intelligence, but we did our work so efficiently no-one had to interfere, neither intelligence nor the publications board ... bothered us".

The effect of the SABC record committee was to ban thousands of songs from the airwaves. Though the use of a card system and regular memos to staff, the committee made it abundantly clear when pieces of music were not to be played. They even went to the trouble of transcribing all songs before censorship meetings, in case musicians or record companies had deliberately submitted incorrect lyric sheets in an attempt to avoid censorship. If an album was submitted to or acquired by the SABC, record library personnel would listen to the entire album. Only controversial songs were actually considered at record library meetings (Interview with Cecile Pracher, 2000). This entire system, under the control of obsessive censors, prevented South African radio audiences from hearing a large quantity of South African music and an even greater quantity of overseas material. Given the SABC's dominance in broadcasting (the only two independent stations are discussed in Chapter Five), the pressure to meet with the censors' approval, or to somehow bypass censorship, was immense for musicians wanting to get airplay, be heard and thereby achieve exposure in a small market. The

effect of the stringent censorship policies outlined here therefore, was to place heavy demands on musicians and record companies to keep musical messages within the straight and narrow dictates of approved moral and political discourse and thereby reinforce the dominant frameworks of control in South African society.

Furthermore, the SABC even went as far as to regularly send their list of censored music to the Directorate of Publications who would look through the list out of interest (Interview with Braam Coetzee, 1998). The submission of the SABC lists did not constitute a formal submission, and so consequently the Directorate did not as a matter of procedure convene a censorship committee around any of these songs, even though many of them were clearly controversial and potentially fell within the ambit of the Directorate's mandate.

4.8 South African Broadcasting Corporation television

SABC television followed a similar procedure to the radio stations in terms of censoring the very little music coverage that was provided. For example, when SABC imposed a ban on Stevie Wonder's music, the ban immediately affected the next evening's Pop Shop music video programme. Another Wonder song, "Love Light in Flight" (1984) was scheduled for Pop Shop, but the entire programme had to be scrapped and was replaced by a hastily compiled 'golden oldies' alternative (Rand Daily Mail, 27 March 1985). A case of over zealous censorship followed in an incident where even his name was censored out of a programme. The presenter of the American music show 'Solid Gold', shown on SABC, mentioned a list of personalities including Stevie Wonder, but when she came to his name, it was censored out of the programme (Eastern Province Herald, 16 September 1985). Jennifer Ferguson (Interview, 1999) remembers how a part of her video for the song "Angel Fish" (1986) had to be edited out because it intimated that a union had taken place between her and a black man with whom she had been dancing. She recalls:

You could dance with a black man if you danced with your back to him, but if you danced facing him that wasn't allowed.

However, in general SABC television only play-listed music on its music video shows (such as 'Pop Shop', 'Easy Beat' and 'Fast Forward') if the music had already received

airplay on one or more of the SABC radio stations. Controversial songs were generally not considered in the first place. Given the monetary investment involved in producing a music video, record companies who were seriously attempting to get a South African music video onto SABC television would ensure that it complied with SABC requirements. For this reason very few cases of music video censorship (in particular) were reported. But quite clearly a large number of music videos were not aired, simply because the music had already been banned by the radio services.

4.9 Conclusion

This chapter has systematically worked through a host of key areas in which censorship of South African music took place on an official government level – whether directly through government legislation or less directly as in the actions of local councils, the police or the SABC. It is significant that government agencies sometimes required the support of others (in civil society) to legitimize and carry out many instances of censorship – for example the religious groups who pressurized the Directorate of Publications. Censorship was not carried out in a monolithic manner by the state, independent of, and completely against the will of the entire public. It is clear that for some areas of censorship practice to operate at least partial public support was needed.

A further indicator that censorship was not pursued in a rigid and cohesive manner was the extent to which inconsistency and moments of contest arose between the different government institutions. Certainly, there was scope for individual discretion within the broader field within which each institution operated. There was resistance to extreme forms of censorship within government institutions, as in the liberal agendas of some of the official government censors and the policemen who gave some musicians a helping hand in avoiding harassment. Yet the SABC censors with their strict criteria and the police who over-eagerly submitted music to the Directorate reflect a zealous support for censorship process. These differences indicate a complex and intricate set of social relations which impacted in varied ways on the South African music context.

These social relations certainly support Foucault's (1976: 93) contention that power is fragmented, exercised from innumerable points. Power was clearly malleable and not strictly confined to the state or legislature. State censors and those who supported them

attempted to use censorship process to draw the boundaries of acceptable discourse (the dominant discourse) within their field of jurisdiction. In terms of the dominant forms of censorship discussed in this chapter, anyone recording or performing music entered a field established and (to various extents) monitored by the Directorate of Publications, the SABC and SAP. Musicians and others entering this field were subjected to censorship processes which ruled out deviant discourses, and which pressured them to utter only what was sayable (Bourdieu, 1993b: 91). In this sense the censors attempted to control the space at the centre, restricting musicians with deviant discourses to the margins. Bourdieu (1993b: 92) argues that "one of the most effective ways a group has of reducing people to silence is by excluding them from the positions from which one can speak". In the terrain of South African popular music censors indeed attempted to operate in this way. The Directorate excluded 'undesirable' music from the shelves of retail outlets and on occasion even from individuals' own shelves at home, while the SABC excluded deviant discourses from airplay and the police attempted to exclude deviant performances from platforms throughout the country. The censors thereby formed part of the state's attempt to present the dominant discourse as desirable, and emergent discourses as undesirable. As revealed in the preceding discussion, the consequences of exclusion varied from personal danger to loss of income, so that songwriters, musicians, record companies and others with a stake in the music industry felt pressured to conform to the parameters of the dominant discourse. The focus of the following chapter shifts towards the impact of state pressure and censorship practices on participants in the music context within the private or corporate sector.

CHAPTER FIVE

Self-regulatory censorship

I'm music, pop music, I'm a vehicle of the state
Big business approve me, their policies dictate

("Hey where's the jol" (1986) – The Aeroplanes)

5.1 Introduction

The discussion in Chapter Four outlined and analysed state censorship in South Africa, including SABC censorship policy. By virtue of the Directorate of Publications and security laws, the state attempted to control what South Africans heard, read and saw. The state's attempt to control discourse was most visibly evidenced in the way the SABC operated, censoring music to the extreme. In this chapter it will be argued that state censorship in turn placed pressure on the private sector to regulate music. The independent radio stations were immediately affected, given their dependence on the South African state for access to the airwaves. Also affected were the record companies. The relationship between record sales and radio play meant that the SABC's (and to a far lesser extent independent radio stations') approach inevitably affected the record companies. Immense pressure was placed on record companies to ensure that albums fitted into the dominant discourses supported by the censors. Failure to do so was likely to result in music either being banned outright by the Directorate and/or not receiving airplay on the SABC and independent radio stations. The buying public would be unlikely to hear the music, almost definitely resulting in financial loss for the record companies.

As a consequence of the maze of formal censorship to be negotiated, record companies (especially the majors) were cautious about what they would record and, in turn, placed pressure on musicians to tone down their lyrics if they wanted to be contracted.

This chapter considers the forms of censorship and control exercised by independent radio stations, record companies, venue owners and musicians. To begin with, Capital Radio and Channel 702 are considered, the two independent radio stations that began operating around about 1980. This discussion follows directly from that of the SABC in

the previous chapter. State and broadcasting censorship provides a context for understanding the self-regulatory censorship that occurred within the record industry, both amongst the majors and independents. A brief discussion of venues as sites of self-censorship precedes a consideration of the impact of institutional censorship on the musicians themselves. Although musicians sometimes reacted through creative strategies of resistance (discussed in Chapters Seven and Eight), the final section of this Chapter focuses on the negative impact of censorship on some musicians, leading in particular to pressure to self-censor.

5.2 Independent radio – Capital and 702

Apart from the SABC radio stations, two independent radio stations operated in South Africa in the 1980s. Capital Radio and Radio 702 were commercial music radio stations based in two of South Africa's 'independent homelands', Transkei and Bophutatswana respectively. Capital Radio was established in late 1979, broadcasting on 604 KHz Medium Wave (hence the common reference to the station as Capital 604) and also on Short Wave radio. It originally broadcast from Port St Johns on the Transkei Wild Coast. Radio 702 began transmission in 1980 on 702 KHz Medium Wave. It transmitted from an area of Bophutatswana situated near Pretoria, but also had a studio in central Johannesburg. This allowed 702 to successfully focus on the large PWV (Johannesburg, Pretoria and surrounding areas) audience, adopting an American-styled hit radio approach, with a conservative and adult-oriented stance towards music and politics (Wrench, 1985: 68-69). In contrast Capital Radio prided itself on its independent status, and for the first few years it fostered the idea that it was politically and musically alternative to SABC stations. It based its format on Capital Radio in London, relied heavily on British disc jockeys and was especially innovative in its choice of music and news items. Although questions concerning Capital's sovereignty were raised, Keyan and Ruth Tomaselli (1989: 139-143) nevertheless regarded Capital as the only South-African based commercial radio station attempting to provide an alternative voice to that of the SABC.

5.2.1 Censorship within a context of relative autonomy

The major constraints for the independent stations paradoxically, could be traced to their lack of independence. Both were either owned or partly owned by their respective bantustan governments of whom they were rarely critical. They also had licensing problems, as was most clearly demonstrated in the case of Capital Radio. The station was plagued by transmitter problems from the onset, and never established a broad audience outside of its immediate surrounds in the Transkei and Natal region (Capital Radio 1980; 1989). In the early 1980s Capital's studio was moved to Johannesburg, and a landline link was established with the transmitters in the Transkei (Wrench, 1985). Transkei was not recognized by the International Telecommunications Union, and therefore could only operate under the discretion of the SABC and the SA Department of Posts and Telecommunications. (Tomaselli and Tomaselli, 1989: 141). This put pressure on Capital (and 702 who were similarly affected) to conform to South African government dictates. Indeed former Capital Music Supervisor and Promotions Manager, Andy Darlington (Interview, July 1998) recalled that the issue of Capital's desire to acquire an FM licence was consistently used to persuade the station to tow the government line:

We were trying desperately to get FM, and they wouldn't give it to us ... At one stage the government said that one of the things was that if we toned down our news they would consider giving us FM. But our news was the news, you know. It was how it was happening, not like we were being told by the SABC. And we wouldn't tone down the news, but musically we didn't really have any problems. Although not strictly bound by South African government legislation (given that the South African government had supposedly granted the homelands 'independence') these radio stations generally kept in line with Directorate of Publications decisions. They did not, however, carry out the form of rigid internal censorship practised by the SABC. When it was established in 1980, Radio 702 opted for an album rather than singles chart. This allowed them a broader range of choice in chart play-lists which could vary from week to week, and politically controversial songs could be avoided.

Capital Radio Dee Jay of the early 1980s, Chris Prior (Interview, 1998), recalled the immense musical freedom in the early years:

At Capital there were no restrictions as such – no restrictions whatsoever – quite the opposite. I mean it was a true rock station... that was a nice place to work for the first two years.

According to Andy Darlington (Interview, 1998), play-list selection was a relaxed and open affair at Capital Radio:

We'd meet with all the deejays and play the stuff to them and get their opinion. So unless something was really terrible we'd vote on it. And obviously take into consideration how well it's done overseas and where it's been and who it is, and so on... At one stage we tried something different. We used to go to a different deejay's house once a week with all those new songs in the evening and we'd play them and each week we'd invite a different record company person to come along. So one week we'd have the EMI representative and the next week we'd have the Sony representative or whatever, so it was quite interesting because then they could see how we did it.

To begin with, Capital Radio established a strong sense of autonomy from South African government dictates. This was most clearly demonstrated in May 1980 when Pink Floyd's "Another brick in the wall" (1979) was banned by the Directorate and Capital Radio continued to play it. Jimmy Cliff's "Give People What They Want" (1981) which charted on Capital, was later banned by the Directorate. In 1986 Latin Quarter's political "Radio Africa" (1986) charted on Capital Radio even though the song criticized the effects of colonialism and South Africa's political policy. The song was not played on SABC. South African musicians with cultural-political messages such as Juluka and Via Afrika who were not played on SABC (in the early 1980s in particular) were played and charted on Capital. In fact Juluka's "Africa" (1980) was banned on SABC because of its political message, but charted on Capital Radio, reaching number 1. The charts were based on Capital's own selection criteria, compiled by the Station Manager who liaised informally with the disc jockeys and took note of the listeners' 'Hit Line' daily top ten songs voted over the phone (Interview with Darlington, 1998). The official Capital Top Forty therefore did not directly reflect listeners' preferences, but rather reflected the stance of the station.

Where financial considerations were significant, a different course of action was pursued. Radio 702 and Capital Radio did not play-list The Artists United Against Apartheid song "(Ain't gonna play) Sun City" (1985) because the former was partly owned by Southern Sun, owners of the Sun City Holiday Resort, while the latter received advertising revenue from Southern Sun (see Chapter Six for further discussion of this song). This was in contrast, however, to the two stations' responses to the SABC ban on Stevie Wonder's music in 1985 (as discussed in Chapter Four). Radio 702's programme director, Gary Edwards (Rand Daily Mail, 27 March 1985), said that the station took Wonder's comments very seriously and that the issue would be discussed. However, the station did not ban Wonder's music from airplay. Capital Radio were clearer on the matter. Head of music at Capital, Anthony Duke (Rand Daily Mail, 27 March 1985), said that the station would not adopt the same policy as the SABC because Capital did not have a political policy regarding music.

Even if formal censorship committees did not exist at Capital and 702, the stations nevertheless practised a relatively strict form of political control in determining their play-lists. This might have had more to do with the hegemony of the dominant discourse than overt systems of control, but whatever the process, explicitly political songs about the South African situation were generally not played on the two stations. According to Dave Marks (Interview, 1998) of 3rd Ear Music, in its first two years capital played some 3rd Ear Music artists. For instance, Flash Harry's "No Football" (1981) banned by the SABC, Colin Shamley and Roger Lucey (the apolitical song "The Road is Much Longer" [1979] was played by Alan Pierce and Chris Prior on late night shows) but overtly political songs pertaining to the South African situation were avoided. Lloyd Ross (Interview, 1998), of independent Shifty Records confirmed that while Capital were friendlier to deal with than the SABC, they nevertheless avoided Shifty's music, probably because it was regarded as more political and was not always as commercially-oriented. This might have been the consequence of the sort of view expressed by long-standing Capital Radio DJ, Kevin Savage (in Carroll, year unknown) who regarded much South African protest music as "white-guilt rock". He argued that:

“I’m not saying they shouldn’t make statements. But I find their opinions almost a student-young musicians type protest. It has no wisdom. It can be very sincere – but you can’t say you’ve attained wisdom until you’re older”.

This confused sentiment goes some way towards explaining the amount of airplay given to apolitical bands like City Limits, Clout, eVoid, Falling Mirror and Stingray in contrast to more politically overt South African musicians such as Roger Lucey, Mzwakhe Mbuli, Jennifer Ferguson, Sankomota, the Kalahari Surfers and the Cherry Faced Lurchers. This latter group of musicians were simply not played, whatever the reason.

Capital Radio did however play-list songs with risqué lyrics and sexual connotations. The station play-listed George Michael’s “I Want Your Sex” (1987). The song spent 12 weeks on the Capital Top 40, peaking at number one, but the station took it off the air after the Directorate of Publications banned it (Interview with Andy Darlington, 1998). South African John Ireland’s sexually suggestive “I Like” (1982), was banned on SABC, but played on Capital. It spent 13 weeks on the Capital Top 40, peaking at number seven. The choice of controversial songs that Capital Radio (and to a far lesser extent 702) were prepared to play is significant. General protest songs such as those by Pink Floyd, Jimmy Cliff and Latin Quarter as well as contentious songs of a religious and sexual nature allowed Capital to stamp a form of independent authority without drawing a strong response from the South African government. However, overtly anti-apartheid songs were avoided, especially ones banned by the Directorate.

5.3 Major record companies

The conservative approach of South African radio stations impacted on record companies who relied heavily on airplay to promote their music. This led to self-regulation within the record industry, particularly amongst the majors. In considering the censorship practices of the major record companies, a brief context needs to be provided. Firstly, for corporate reasons, the relationship between South African major record companies and overseas music has been one in which the South African majors have primarily focused their attention on distributing overseas music within South Africa, with negative consequences for local music. Secondly, the majors have readily exploited local musicians in order to cut costs, particularly making use of existing social inequalities (in

the form of apartheid and its effects, such as illiteracy, on black musicians) to minimize costs through ultra-exploitative contracts. Attempts to maximize profits necessitated moulding their music according to the requirements of the SABC's different stations. The major record companies thus mass-produced songs which, musically and in terms of language, complied with Radio Bantu and other SABC music programme formats for South Africa's different 'tribes'. Within this context the majors adapted to the SABC's (and the Directorate's) demand for acceptable lyrics which would not offend overly cautious censors.

The ensuing discussion concentrates on the most significant dynamics within major record company politics. Given that the focus of the study is on censorship practices (and on the 1980s in particular), the fascinating history of the majors cannot be dealt with here.

5.3.1 The corporate priority of South African major record companies

In Chapter One it was posited that an important aspect of 'popular music' is that it is performed and/or recorded as a product for a popular market. David Laing (1969: 7) argues that the formalization of a cash relationship between performer and audience "signified the arrival of popular music. This relationship was the essential basis upon which the complex development of popular music and its industrial apparatus took place". The roots of South African popular music can be traced back to the mechanization and commodification of traditional music. European record companies sensed the potential for expansion into the African market. English record companies began to set up branches in Johannesburg in the 1920s and 1930s. While they were chiefly set up to distribute imported records, they did record traditional music (both in South Africa and in England) and sold it to an increasing urban market (Coplan, 1985: 135).

Robert Burnett (1996: 17) notes that the transnationals' involvement in local contexts was double-edged, distributing overseas music and attempting to identify local trends to exploit internationally. In South Africa it was more lucrative to act as distributors of overseas music, releasing it onto the South African market. Rob Allingham (Interview, 1998), archivist at Gallo, certainly felt that:

It was a hell of a lot easier for them to make money out of something that was pre-recorded, pre-packaged. They just got the master shipped over here, they got a nice little press kit that they just cranked up for local consumption. All they really had to do was suss which of these golden pears from America or the UK could be transplanted here, and they could make money out of it. And that definitely diverted their attention away from the tougher business of having to actually create something here.

Local context was an important factor in the majors' approach. Roger Wallis and Krister Malm (1984: 105-108) argue that the transnationals' pursuit of extra sales of international product varies from time to time according to finance and politics. It certainly is not a foregone conclusion that overseas distribution is lucrative. However, the cultural boycott in South Africa in the 1980s, together with tight copyright controls and a local fascination with Western culture ensured that it was most profitable for local record companies to market overseas music. Rob Allingham (Interview, 1998) argued that:

Part of the problem was that at that period of time, except for those very few independents out there like Shifty, you had a very few companies that controlled not only the market for local music here, but also overseas licenses. And the reason they controlled the overseas licences was because those overseas licensees at that point couldn't afford politically to admit that they were very involved here.

For these companies, scouting for, recording and promoting local music (especially on an overseas basis) was not a priority when such alternative lucrative pickings were on offer. However, overseas majors based in South Africa were suitably placed for talent-spotting purposes in case "the next big trend" emerged in South Africa (Wallis and Malm, 1984: 105). Majors certainly attempted to promote South African talent overseas in the early 1980s (Neil Solomon and Via Afrika for example) but it soon became clear that the cultural boycott made overseas promotion futile. The situation for many musicians in the 1980s was so dire that musician Willem Möller (Interview, 1998) felt that the major record companies:

Were very happy with apartheid. It suited them fine. You had cultural isolation which created a bigger demand for imported stuff which suited them fine because that's where their money was. They were probably very happy with the situation.

The result was that locally produced (particularly) white pop/rock suffered severely. Albums usually sold less than one thousand copies and seldom sold more than a few thousand copies within the predominantly minority white (and generally English) market. The rewards and incentives for musicians were thus minimal (Chapman, 1988: 80). In turn, pressure was placed on the musician in the recording studio to produce radio-friendly (in every sense of the term) music. Knowing that the market was small, the best way to increase sales was to have music played on the radio, particularly the SABC. The temptation to censor lyrics accordingly was therefore immense. As indicated in the previous chapter, this was true of all musicians wanting to promote their music. The constraints upon musicians whose music only appealed to a marginal audience was clearly much more severe.

5.3.2 Apartheid and the majors

The approach of most record companies (certainly all the majors) towards musicians was to record their music at the minimum of cost. This is the basic approach to any profit-making organization, in maximizing profits. Furthermore, employers typically seek to utilize existing social inequalities to further exploit employees. R. Barron and D. Norris (1976: 57) argue that severe exploitation of this sort is obscured and justified because it coincides with broader social divisions. As in the United States, the South African majors made use of racial inequality in broader society to exploit black musicians as far as possible (see for example Szatmary [1996: 24-28] and Nuzum [2001:102-103] for details concerning exploitation of African American musicians prior to the 1960s). Roddy Quinn (Interview, 1998) former Director of EMI Music South Africa, explained how:

In the black market once you got a hit formula you just kept churning them out, at the cheapest possible price. And got them out into the market as soon as possible. That's why some of those artists just burned out at the end of the day. There was no guidance or planning of their career. It was just sell as many records as you can as quickly as you can.

Harvey Roberts (Interview, 1998), who headed CCP (Clive Calder Productions), the black division of EMI in the late 1980s, saw the unfair practises in the music industry as being profit-driven:

The music industry is a business, like any other business, and there will always be people who come into that business for their own motives who maybe do not have very strong moral viewpoints about what they are doing. They are in it to make a quick buck and make as much money as possible and they don't really care who they tread on. I think that happens in any business. It certainly does still happen in the music business. I can only say that, yes, I hear horror stories from artists who have been exploited and who have definitely been badly exploited.

Unlike white musicians, who operated within a small and generally lukewarm (towards local music) market, successful black musicians could potentially sell tens or even hundreds of thousands of albums within the large African market. Musicians such as the Soul Brothers, Mahlathini, Harari, Brenda Fassie, Chicco and Ladysmith Black Mambazo achieved high album sales. However, in order to do so, they needed to conform to the record industry's agenda, which included tried and tested music formulae. From the outset, racial and language differences within South African society and the record buying market beset the record industry. In terms of racialized audiences, the industry reflected broader social inequalities and differences in a way similar to the United States (see for example Tagg, 1989; Keil, 1994; Potter, 1999; Shank, 2001). Operating within South Africa's fragmented society, the major record companies divided their efforts along the lines of black and white markets rather than according to musical styles, assuming that almost totally separate markets existed for musicians of different races. This market segmentation was reified with the more sophisticated apartheid infrastructure at the SABC with the introduction of the various Radio Bantu services in the 1960s (as outlined in Chapter Four).

However, as was intimated in the previous chapter, some musicians of different races did perform together. One of the earliest bands to do so was Hawk. Johnny Clegg and Siphō Mchunu formed a duo, which went on to become Juluka. When Juluka became popular amongst whites and blacks some record companies realized the commercial potential of crossover acts and began to promote such groups. With the relaxing of petty apartheid laws aimed at keeping races apart, mixed-race performances were no longer illegal, opening space for bands such as Zia, Juluka, Savuka and Mango Groove to perform without the obstacles which earlier bands – like Hawk – had to face.

For financial reasons, record companies were prepared to follow the formulaic requirements of the SABC and market their music accordingly, rather than to attempt to set trends by cultivating cross-racial appreciation of different forms of music (or just merely music performed by people of different races). By the 1980s the music industry was virtually divided into two markets – black and white. Chris Chapman (1988:80) noted how the split between black and white markets was such that each had its own support structure, media, record outlets, concert venues and record companies servicing it. The split was so marked that the major record companies, particularly EMI and Gallo, were themselves actually split into black and white divisions. For example, once EMI had bought out CCP, all their black artists were allocated to CCP, while EMI itself was seen to deal with white musicians and some crossover acts such as Juluka and Savuka. Management structures were not necessarily racialized but depended on people's expertise. For example, as mentioned above, Harvey Roberts, a white South African, headed CCP in the late 1980s. Within the black divisions record companies further promoted the ethnic divisions of apartheid by encouraging multi-lingual musicians to release albums in different languages to exploit different ethnic markets, rather than encouraging a multi-ethnic audience. For example, CCP released Babsy Mlangeni's albums under such titles as *Babsy Mlangeni Sings Sotho Vocal* and *Baby Mlangeni Sings Xhosa Jive* (Kerkhof, 1986: 31). Although there were additional costs involved in producing the same (or similar) album in different languages, the ploy guaranteed additional airplay on the different ethnic radio stations, and it broadened the potential album-purchasing audience.

5.3.3 Major censorship

As has been shown, the virtual monopoly of the South African airwaves by the conservative SABC and reluctance of the independent stations to play controversial music, put pressure on record companies and they in turn on musicians, to practice self-censorship so as to receive airplay. Rob Allingham (Interview, 1998) explained how the majors:

Would be totally unwilling to record anything that they knew was not going to be saleable...beginning in the 60s when you had that Bantu Radio system set-up at

the same time as the royalty system came in. You know this is one of the ironies of the situation, that the royalty system reinforced the self-censorship here.

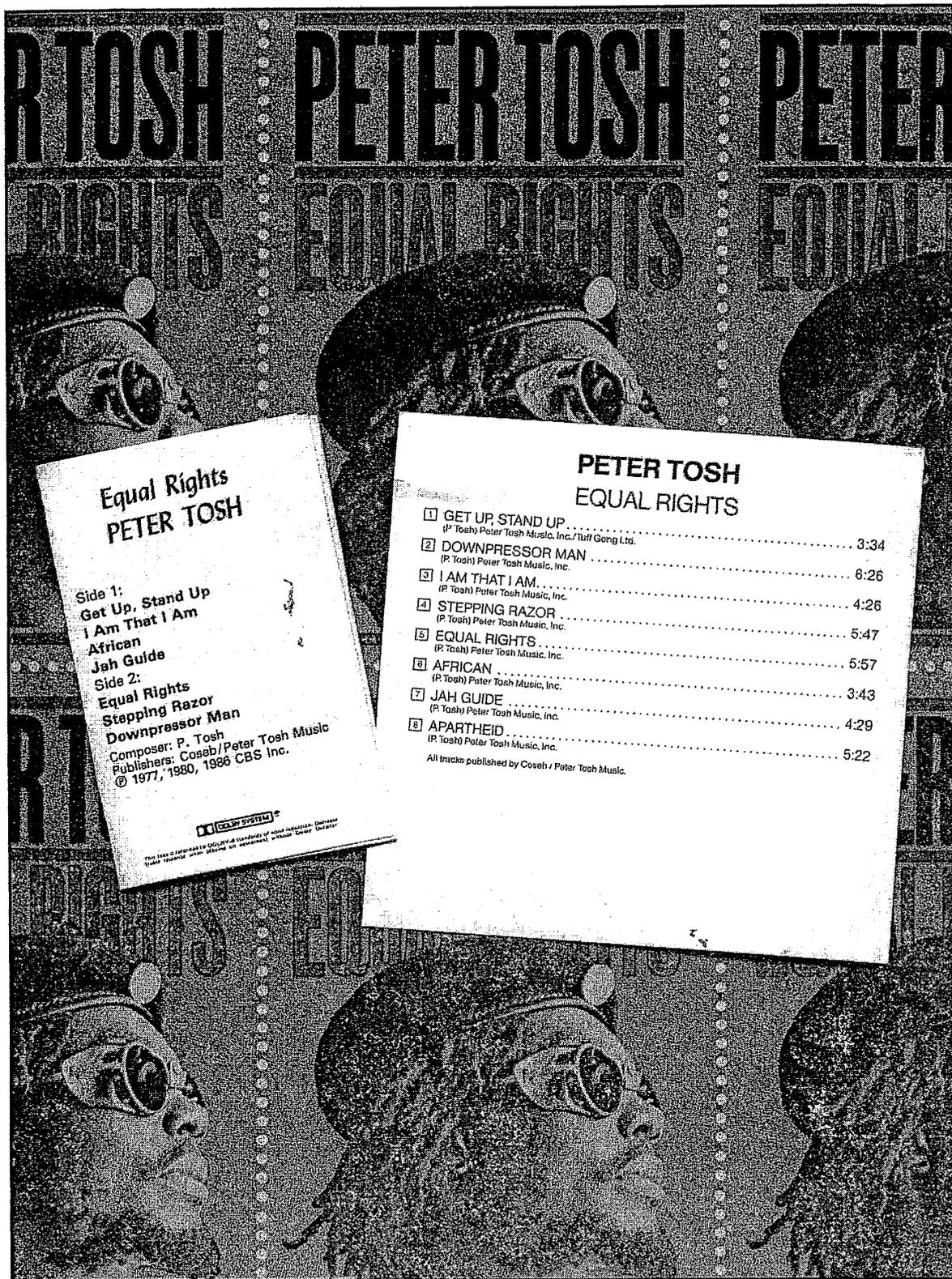
Because all of a sudden if an artist was going to get any financial reward out of his work, he better not record something that wasn't going to be played on the radio because then he wasn't going to make any money out of it. Whereas in the old days, of course, it didn't matter whether it sold ten copies or ten thousand copies, he still got his five pounds or whatever. I've been told by many musicians that recording something that was not going to be played was just futile. Why bother? And certainly the companies had exactly that same attitude as well. The bottom line was that they wanted to make money.

As a result, record companies often made changes to songs or albums both prior to initial release and sometimes as a result of songs being banned by the Directorate of Publications or the SABC. For example, when the Directorate banned Peter Tosh's *Equal Rights* (1977) album because of the song "Apartheid", CBS re-released the album without the banned track on it (see Image 5. 1), and when Pink Floyd's *The Wall* (1979) was banned by the Directorate because of the single "Another Brick in the Wall" (1979), CBS re-released the album without the 'undesirable' song. Similarly, when the Directorate banned Chris De Burgh's *Spanish Train and Other Stories* (1976) album because of the title track, A&M re-released the album as *Lonely Sky and Other Stories* (1976) without the banned track. After appeal, the ban on the album was lifted on the provision that an acceptable explanation of the song's meaning be provided on the album cover. Subsequently the album, as well as *Chris De Burgh Live in S. A.* (1979), included a front cover sticker which stated:

"Featuring Spanish Train, the song about the endless struggle between good and evil and why good must win".

In a pre-emptive act, without any state intervention, EMI omitted "Burden of Shame" from UB40's *Signing Off* (1980) album. The song criticized Britain's supportive role of the apartheid government.

These examples emphasize the way censorship impacts on space. In cases where songs originally included on albums were left out, an interested spatial dynamic occurred.



**Equal Rights
PETER TOSH**

Side 1:
Get Up, Stand Up
I Am That I Am
African
Jah Guide

Side 2:
Equal Rights
Stepping Razor
Downpressor Man

Composer: P. Tosh
Publishers: Coseb/Peter Tosh Music
© 1977, 1980, 1986 CBS Inc.



This label is approved by GOLDEN LEAF as standard of most countries. Other labels indicate other standards or approvals unless stated otherwise.

**PETER TOSH
EQUAL RIGHTS**

- 1 GET UP, STAND UP 3:34
(P. Tosh) Peter Tosh Music, Inc./Tuff Gong Ltd.
- 2 DOWNPRESSOR MAN 8:26
(P. Tosh) Peter Tosh Music, Inc.
- 3 I AM THAT I AM 4:26
(P. Tosh) Peter Tosh Music, Inc.
- 4 STEPPING RAZOR 5:47
(P. Tosh) Peter Tosh Music, Inc.
- 5 EQUAL RIGHTS 5:57
(P. Tosh) Peter Tosh Music, Inc.
- 6 AFRICAN 3:43
(P. Tosh) Peter Tosh Music, Inc.
- 7 JAH GUIDE 4:29
(P. Tosh) Peter Tosh Music, Inc.
- 8 APARTHEID 5:22
(P. Tosh) Peter Tosh Music, Inc.

All tracks published by Coseb / Peter Tosh Music.

Image 5. 1 The censored cassette version of Peter Tosh's *Equal Rights* album (left) with the song "Apartheid" missing. The song reappeared on a post-1994 CD version (right).

This is best borne out through the example of Chris De Burgh's *Spanish Train and Other Stories* (1976) album. With the banning of the song "Spanish Train", a reconstitution of space occurred, replacing the original album title with *Lonely Sky and Other Stories*. Furthermore, the spaces occupied by the listing of "Spanish Train" on the back cover and vinyl label of the original version were blank on the second (censored) version (see Image 5.2). The production of censored space by omitting songs from albums happened repeatedly during the apartheid era, reflecting "an injunction to silence, an affirmation of non-existence, and, by implication, an admission that there was nothing to say about such

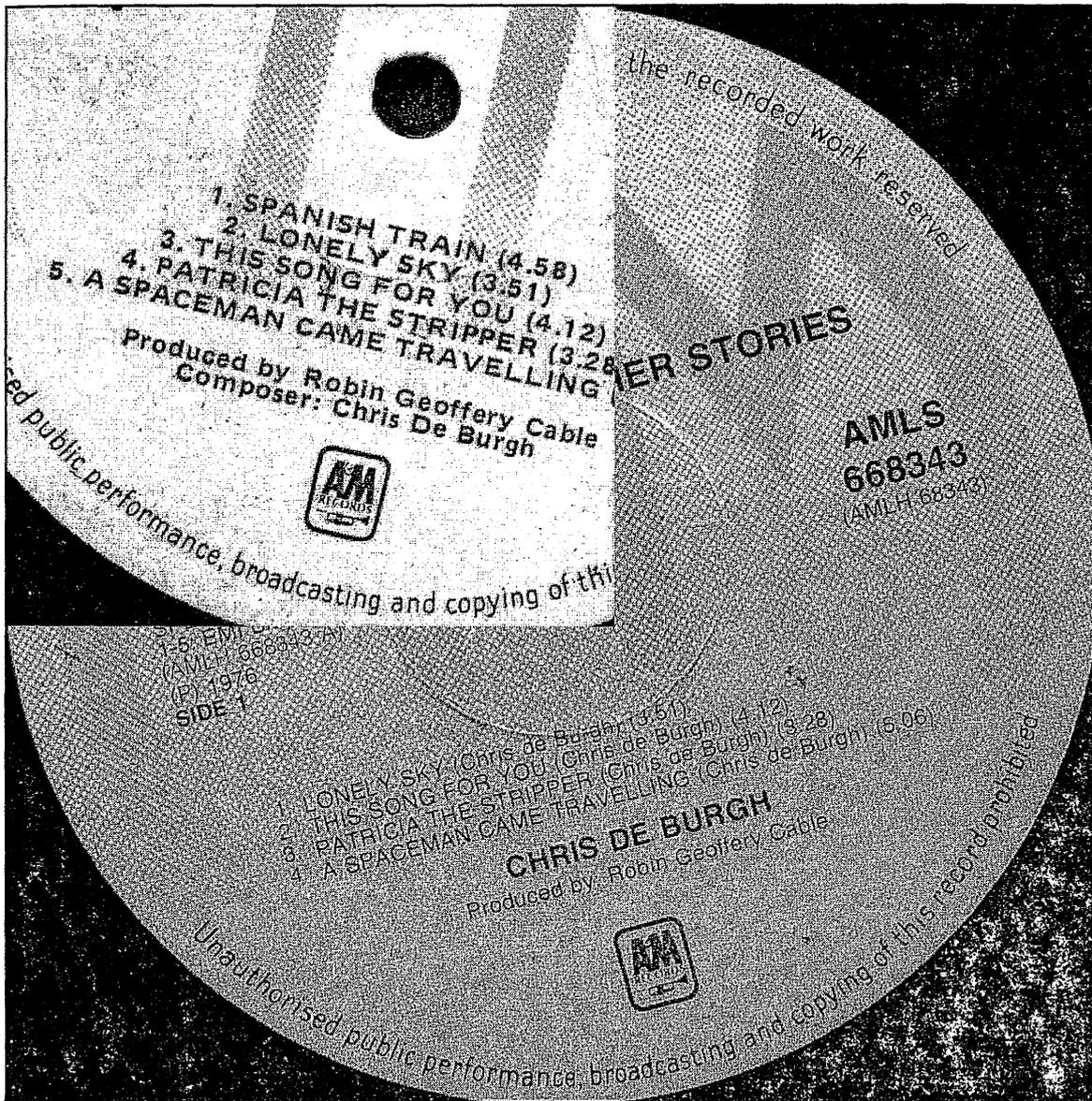


Image 5. 2 Chris De Burgh's missing song.

things, nothing to see, nothing to know" (Foucault, 1976: 4).

Apart from the omission, in print form, of the banned song, a corresponding amount of vinyl space also reflected an absence: a shorter album with one less recorded song. The banning of "Apartheid" by Peter Tosh, however, involved a different spatial dynamic. Simply removing the song "Apartheid" from the *Equal Rights* (1977) album would not just have left a blank space, but would have caused a very noticeable imbalance in the length of the two sides of the record (and cassette). The re-released version of the album therefore involved a reconstitution of space, a reordering of the songs. Of the remaining tracks, the four shortest appeared on the first side, while the longest three were placed on the second side (see Image 5.1). In this instance the missing song was not simply dropped, leaving blank spaces where it had previously been listed and cut into the vinyl. The blank spaces were almost hidden in the re-mix, lost within the reconstitution of space.

Not all censorship was affected because of actual or potential Directorate of Publications intervention. With the importance of airplay on SABC as a motivation, record companies often made changes to ensure airplay. Given that all songs play-listed on SABC had to be approved by the SABC censors, the censors' approval was regularly sought before a single was in fact pressed and released. This is clearly revealed in a letter from a representative of Trutone Music to the SABC. In the letter the Trutone representative discussed a proposed single release of the song "Severina" (1987) by The Mission. Referring to the lyrics, she says: "I am sure they are fine, if so we can release that single which is the next one planned" (Letter from Trutone Music to Cecile Pracher of the SABC library, dated 5 August 1987, located in the SABC radio archives).

E.M.I. cut out a line from the seven single version of Olivia Newton John's "Physical" (1981) to appease SABC censors. The line "There's nothin' left to talk about unless it's horizontally" was cut from the single release. The unedited version was released on the *Physical* (1981) album. Wanting to avoid SABC censorship, WEA censored Rickie Lee Jones' "Chuck E's in Love" (1979) editing out the expression 'By Christ' after getting permission from the singer to do so (Interview with Benjy Mudie, 1998). Anticipating problems at the SABC over Mi-Sex's name, CBS released the group's "Computer Games" (1980) under the band name 'M.S.' However, given that the Directorate were

unlikely to ban an album on the basis of Mi-Sex's name, the album *Graffiti Crimes* (1980) was released under the band's full name. So as to avoid confusion amongst potential purchasers of the album, CBS affixed a sticker to the album, drawing attention to the fact that Mi-Sex was M.S. who had released the single "Computer Games". (See Image 5.3)



Image 5.3 Explanatory label on Mi-Sex's *Graffiti Crimes* album.

The extent of the SABC censors' ability to influence changes is again expressed in a letter from the Managing Director of Priority Records to Cecile Pracher. In the letter he discusses one of the songs off the South African *District Six – The Musical*. He notes that:

“Whilst we are not all unhappy with this decision (sic), we would appreciate it if you could indicate to us exactly the parts of the song you find offensive. The reason that we are asking this is that we think the song is probably the best track on the album and we would, if possible, re-record it leaving out the offensive

parts so that we can obtain airplay on that number.' We would appreciate it greatly if you could assist us in telling us exactly what we need to omit or change in our revised version." (Letter from Priority Records to Cecile Pracher of the SABC library dated 11 December 1986, located in the SABC radio archives).

The readiness of record companies to make changes to songs in order to ensure airplay is revealed in a letter from an EMI Label Manager to the SABC record library (and member of the record committee), Cecile Pracher, about Hot Chocolate's "You Sexy Thing" (1987) which had not been passed by the committee (see Image 5.4).

The threat of commercial failure was repeatedly used by the industry to persuade musicians to tone down their lyrics. This even went as far as controlling what albums could be pressed at their pressing plants (of which there were only two in the country) by independent labels. Independent Shifty Records pressed their records at the EMI pressing plant. According to Lloyd Ross (Interview, 1998) of Shifty, EMI:

inflicted a kind of self-censorship on a few of our records which I thought was, and I still think it is, completely reprehensible.

In fact Warrick Sony (Interview, 1998) had to resort to pressing his first three Kalahari Surfers albums overseas because EMI refused to press them, and he only managed to get his fourth album pressed at EMI by taking the recording to the pressing plant himself and distracting the technician while he was mastering the album so that he did not hear the lyrics!

Many South African musicians who worked with the majors experienced pressure to censor their albums. For example, Neil Solomon, whose debut album *The Occupant* (1981) was released by WEA, (Interview, 1998) recalled how:

One (song) was called "The Stranger Within You" but it was actually "The *strangler* within you", and the record company said 'Well if you want airplay, change it'. Which I suppose looking back I shouldn't maybe have changed strangler to stranger, but stranger was still a good enough word for me.

Solomon (Interview, 1998) proceeded to provide an insight into the necessity to conform to record company dictates. He argued that:

I would rather write a love song that I know was intact as a song and got airplay. Because if you said a swear word or if you said something political, they would

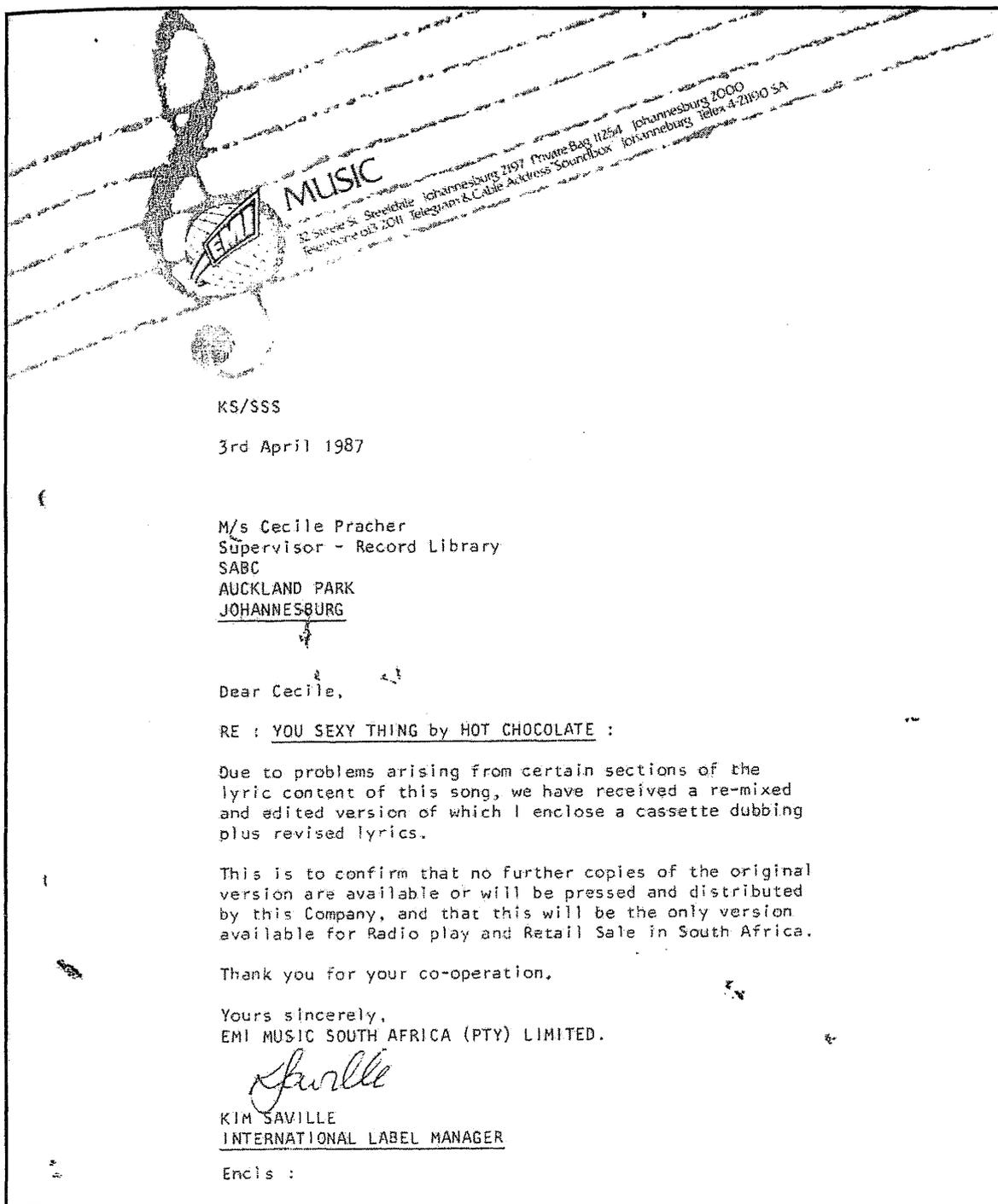


Image 5. 4 Letter from EMI to the SABC library (located in the SABC radio archives).

take a whole chunk of a song out, a verse, and just splice the tape together and the song would be shortened, so that they could still get the airplay. That's what record companies were doing. So I think in a way I was just looking after myself

because I hate chopping up songs. I mean the only thing I ever did was change 'strangler' to 'stranger', but besides that I would just rather give a bunch of songs that I know would get airplay rather than damage those songs that I had written. Roger Lucey (Interview, 1998), has very sour memories of his only recording experience with a major company – WEA:

The second album was a complete compromise because at that time we were with WEA, and sort of unbeknownst to me at the time, but I was getting an inkling of it, the security police were starting to threaten all around. *Half Alive* was just a compromise. It was them coming to me and saying 'Listen, just tone down this, make another album and then we can try and get it in'. And you know, that whole thing of working the system from the inside, which I thought was a pile of shit. But I did it nonetheless. I needed to keep working you know!

Heather Mac of Ella Mental (Interview, 1998) spoke in similarly scathing terms of the way EMI dealt with their lyrics:

When EMI finally got their claws into us and started almost driving where we should be going, and 'be careful we can't use those lyrics because we're going to land up having the song banned on the radio, let's think a little bit more broadly,' [The band relented] ... because at the time we were so desperate for success and we were working so fucking hard. I mean I was waitressing, airbrushing, making leather shoes. Tim was running on movies just to survive very basically in Berea in a commune.

In terms of the SABC's rationale, EMI's concern was justified as pointed out by Heather Mac (Interview, 1998):

They warned us with our last single that was released, "Mad Man", which was dedicated to P. W. They warned us, 'Okay we'll go with it' because we started putting our feet down, but they said, 'You do realize that there's a strong probability that it's not going to be play-listed'. And one week after it had been play-listed it was taken off.

Juluka recorded their first album, *Universal Men* with CBS in 1979, a few months before Zimbabwe's independence. When recording the song "Sky People", Johnny Clegg (in Pithouse, 2000:40) recalls how:

“There was a huge fight in the studio. I wanted to use the line ‘The drums of Zimbabwe speak, they roll across the great divide’ but everyone was convinced that would lead to the album being banned so we changed it to ‘The drums of Zambezi speak’”.

It was felt that the actual reference to changes in Zimbabwe rolling into South Africa was too overt. Changing the reference to the Zambezi River, from whence the liberating army had fought for Zimbabwean liberation, was regarded as a safer, cryptic alternative.

As a result of these sorts of dynamics within the majors, many politically overt musicians with a protest message bypassed the majors altogether. Lee Edwards (Interview, 1998) of the Cherry Faced Lurchers explained that:

We didn't try to work with the majors at all. I think we always knew they would not be interested in us, and I think we also knew that whatever we were saying, the majors would want to tone down ... The [Asylum] Kids were signed, and immediately Peter Human said “Schoolboy” was not allowed to be played on Radio 5. He did not think it was a positive song for kids. So I think that the majors had had bad experiences with anything that was slightly controversial. So I don't think the majors were going to look at us anyway.

This is where the more progressive independent record companies played a crucial role in South African popular music history. By not always operating primarily according to the principle of profit-maximization, they could afford to record more controversial music (as is discussed in the Section on independents in Chapter Eight).

5.3.4 The majors: an assessment

Although the majors clearly towed the state (including SABC) line to a great extent, it would be wrong to view them simply as state agents, manipulating music to support the apartheid system and Calvinist values of the government. Coplan (1979: 9) slipped into this form of binary approach when he interpreted the supply of appropriate music by record companies to the SABC to fit their Radio Bantu formats as one of collusion with the apartheid government. He argued that the growth of mbaqanga in the 1960s paralleled the major record companies' pursuance of a policy of 'cultural retrenchment'. Similarly Valmont Layne (1995: 65) argued that “the political changes which accompanied

industrialization helped to put in place White cultural hegemony with its foundation in large institutions such as the SABC and the markets of its entertainment allies – the record companies”. In locating the actions of record companies within narrow political parameters, Coplan and Layne ignored the record companies’ primary motivation of profit making. Indeed, Allingham (Interview, 1998) argued that the stance taken by the record companies was economically and not politically driven. He stressed that:

The record companies in no way took it upon themselves to reinforce whatever machinations the state had in mind as far as directing culture, but the bottom line for them was, and always is, and always probably will be, that they want to make money.

Radio Bantu certainly provided the record companies with new audience and markets with a potential avenue for vast profits, which the record companies exploited. Yet at the same time the major record companies did not steer clear of protest music, as is seen in their furious promotion and distribution of reggae music. Reggae music was profitable. It was one of the few forms of music popular which appealed to a cross section of South Africa’s racially diverse society. It did not matter to the majors that it had a strong protest element, but rather that it would sell. As has been shown, when the message did upset the government sufficiently to lead to a banning (as in the case of Peter Tosh) some companies were quick to make changes in the interest of sales. Most likely for this reason, Ingrid Byerly (1996: 118), unlike Coplan and Layne, located record companies – also in binary terms – on the side opposed to the government when she spoke of demarcations of insiders and outsiders with “the process of government censorship (on the one hand) and the South African musicians and music industry (on the other hand)”. Yet she too overstates the position of record companies. Syd Kitchen (Interview, 1998) referred to the politics of the industry as sometimes being even more sinister than the government. Record companies, while rarely openly colluding with the government’s apartheid rationale, were often over zealous in their self-censorship, very rarely took a stand against Directorate decisions and were all too keen to make use of existing racial inequalities to severely exploit black musicians. The majors’ manipulation of any profitable opportunities, sometimes in the interests of apartheid ideology, sometimes not,

emphasizes that their actions cannot be explained by means of an oversimplified binary approach, whichever side one adopts.

5.4 Independent record companies

While the profit-making motives and generally cumbersome nature of major record companies limited their ability to mount a serious challenge to censorship (especially that of the SABC and to a lesser extent direct state intervention), independent record companies proved more able and capable of offering resistance to these forces. To some extent this corresponds with an international pattern whereby, "independents operate less conventionally than the majors through a network of independent, often short-term contacts and contracts [balanced] between the need to operate within a commercial market, and a desire to innovate" (Burnett, 1996: 59). Syd Kitchen (Interview, 1998) went as far as to argue that it is:

The periphery industries are where people fight hegemony, where people try and break the hegemony of the industry and of the constraints around them.

Whereas Frith (1983) and Negus (1996:43) have argued that the relationship between majors and independents is one of symbiosis rather than tension, in 1980s South Africa, Kitchen's point was particularly apt. The operation of independents such as Shifty and 3rd Ear Music throughout the 1980s varied significantly from the majors. With many independents, musicians were not only given far greater freedom with respect to the production of their material, but often found themselves working with companies who were themselves working at ways of outmanoeuvring state control and various forms of censorship (for detailed discussion see Chapter Eight).

However, not all the independents were progressive. Some of the independents, like Jo'burg Records, which closed down at the end of the 1970s, were in many ways just smaller versions of the majors, with the exception that they tended to deal with all their artists without reference to race and style of music as opposed to the majors who, as has been indicated, tended to streamline musicians according to race and corresponding market appeal. As was shown in Chapter Four, Patrick van Blerk of Jo'burg Records marketed Margaret Singana for a mixed audience despite this not being acceptable to the SABC at the time. He persevered and in 1977 her song "I Never Loved a Man" (1977)

was one of the top songs of the year on Radio 5, SABC's predominantly white (and coloured) commercial music radio station.

5.4.1 Independent censorship

Bands who recorded with Jo'burg records were often persuaded to censor their music. Rabbitt (1972) recorded a cover version of Jethro Tull's "Locomotive Breath" (1971) for airplay, and changed the line "got him by the balls" to "got him by the horns".

Encouraged by the promise of radio play on SABC's Radio 5, another Jo'burg Records band, the Radio Rats, cut a full verse from their single "ZX Dan" (1979). The verse referred to the grotesque features of a space alien who fell in love with a sixteen-year-old girl. The edited single went on to peak at Number 2 on the Radio 5 Top Twenty. As indicated in Chapter Four, the Rats were also persuaded to change their song "Fucking Around in the Dungeons All Day" to "Mucking Around in the Dungeon All Day".

Of the independents operating in the 1980s, 3rd Ear Music, Mountain Records and Shifty Records were the most innovative and resistant to dominant discourses in signing musicians and recording their music. Gary Hertselman (Interview, 1998) explained the contrast between a typical major's approach and that of independents like Shifty Records. He viewed Shifty's contribution as crucial:

Essentially I think the major record companies have let most of South African musicians down and in different ways ... I think Lloyd [Ross, of Shifty Records] really stood up for those guys and helped them. People like the Lurchers would never have been heard, Sankomota, Mzwakhe Mbuli. The first Tananas album was made by Shifty Records. You know the record companies couldn't even see these people. They were completely blind. And I'm still, I hate to say that I'm an enemy of the major record companies, but I just don't accept the way they work. They're all run by accountants, that kind of thing. They feel nothing for the music; most of them don't even know what music they're selling. All it means to most of those reps is whether they can improve their car next month, or get a better car and that kind of thing.

Despite their strong stand against apartheid and their strong belief in the independence of the bands they recorded, the independent companies referred to here did occasionally

practice self-censorship. When Roger Lucey recorded his first album *The Road is Much Longer* (1979) 3rd Ear Music had problems with the management at the pressing plant who refused to press it in its existing form. 3rd Ear then received legal advice to the effect that, in terms of security legislation, some of the statements on the album could lead to long-term prison sentences and/or heavy fines for both Roger Lucey and Dave Marks of 3rd Ear Music. As a result two versions of the album were released. In the commercial release, the most controversial track on the album, "Lungile Tabalaza", was omitted and a verse of "You Only Need Say Nothing" was left off the album. A number of trivial songs such as "Pay Me the Dues on the Bottles" were included on the album to lessen the focus of those which were overtly political such as "You Only Need Say Nothing" and "Thabane". Roger Lucey was opposed to the changes, but conceded out of concern for Dave Marks and 3rd Ear Music. Lucey (Interview, 1998) recalled that:

I was of the opinion at the time, and this is where David and I disagreed, that fuck them, let's just go with it, I'll take what's coming to me. But, you know, that was a typical thinking-for-myself attitude, because David had a publishing house that I supposed they could have closed down. They could have really harassed him as well.

Once the album was released and subsequently banned, Lucey was particularly annoyed because he felt that they should have just put it out as they had wanted to in the first place. The compromises had not prevented the banning.

At Mountain Records, David Kramer's first album, *Bakgat* (1979), had been a cult success, but the entire album was banned by SABC. Consequently Mountain Director, Paddy Lee Thorpe, encouraged Kramer to record some commercial songs which could be played on the radio. However, Thorpe only encouraged Kramer in that direction and certainly was not insistent (Interview with Kramer, 1998). Kramer agreed to release a short album of songs written around the theme of a retired rugby player, Blokkies Joubert, looking back on his career. The album *The Story of Blokkies Joubert* (1981) was a big success, selling over 70 000 copies.

At Shifty Records, Lloyd Ross's approach was to allow the musicians to express themselves as they wanted to, provided they fitted into Shifty's prescribed framework. As he said:

I was only really interested in music that had some kind of social comment in it, because it was very difficult to live in this country with the kind of shit that was going down, and ignore it. And as far as I was concerned, if people didn't actually have some kind of reference to that in their music, and I'm not talking about like heavy political songs or protest songs even, I'm just talking about some kind of conscience in their album, I'm not talking about every song either. I just felt it was dishonest, you know, it was difficult to create in this country without having some kind of awareness through your art of what was going on.

Given this understanding of what 'South African' ought to be about, Shifty did not censor their musicians although, as indicated earlier, this was occasionally done for them (without permission) by the EMI pressing plant. On two occasions Shifty, along with the musicians themselves, was directly involved in self-censorship. The first involved an album by Bernoldus Niemand (James Phillips) recorded in the mid-'80s. According to Lee Edwards (of Phillips' band the Cherry Faced Lurchers, Interview, 1998):

The truth of the whole Bernoldus thing as far as I see was that James and Lloyd decided to make this record which was to get airplay on Radio Highveld to make money, it was a commercial venture. It was a tongue in cheek commercial venture. It grew, it became something else in the studio, because it was recorded over a year, and it did become something else. But James's initial idea, at the time there were all these albums called on *Hooked On: Hooked on Guitar* and *Hooked on Classics*. So James's title for that album was *Still Mostly Hooked on Dagga (marijuana) Volume 3*, which I thought was a fantastic title. But obviously Tinus (Esterhuizen of the SABC) was not going to be happy with that, so then at the time there was the Cavalier that played in disguise, so it was decided to do this *Wie is Bernoldus Niemand* incognito thing.

Already having compromised over the title of the album, Shifty submitted the track "Hou My Vas Korporaal" (Hold Me Tight Corporal) to the SABC for airplay. They felt that the song would be a big hit amongst the army troops as a good piece of irony. However, despite spending a lot of time mixing and remixing the song so that it would not offend the SABC censors it was nevertheless rejected by Tinus Esterhuizen on the grounds that it provided a pessimistic view of the army. Warrick Sony (1991: 114) who was working

with Shifty at the time felt that in the end it was not worth the compromise. He complained that:

“We were behaving like the rest of the industry because we were still slaves to Radio. We were losing the joy of being independent record makers. We had lost the power to say fuck you to the SABC”.

After this unsuccessful attempt at a commercial breakthrough, Shifty did not make the effort again. Some of their songs did receive airplay (for example Jennifer Ferguson and Tananas) but in the end Lloyd Ross (Interview, 1998) said that:

It was very frustrating trying to get stuff played on the radio. Eventually I just gave up. I didn't take stuff to radio anymore.

The second instance in which Shifty was involved in self-censorship was more coercive. As indicated in Chapter Four, in 1989 the Directorate banned the Kalahari Surfers' *Bigger Than Jesus* album. On appeal Shifty was allowed to release the album on the condition that the title be changed. Shifty re-titled it *Beachbomb* and simply stuck a sticker with the new title over the previous title. Again this involved a compromise, but did not affect the actual album and allowed the original songs (unscathed) to be sold to the South African public.

5.4.2 The independents – an assessment

South African independent record companies operated within the same constraining government and broadcasting context as the majors. Yet despite the occasional compromise, some of the independents showed that a stronger stand against censorship could be taken than the stance adopted by majors. However, many independents tended to simply operate as small-scale majors. Examples that fit this mould include Jo'burg records, Tusk and the sort of quasi-independent set-up formed by the Soul Brothers, who retained strong creative and financial independence whilst working through a major throughout the production and distribution process. Depending on the dynamics of specific independents, self-censorship was practised at different levels, but generally to a lesser degree than in the majors (see Chapter Eight for further consideration of the stance adopted by the independents).

5.5 Retail outlets and distribution companies

Distribution of records in South Africa in the 1980s was monopolized by a few companies. Benjy Mudie explained that:

Retail in the '80s was very tightly controlled by MFP and the CNA group, but mainly MFP – the OK Bazaars and Checkers group. If you didn't get a record in to them, you weren't in the game. In the late '70s there were still a lot of indie stores, but by the mid-'80s the indie stores had almost disappeared, so it was a real struggle.

To exacerbate matters, when an independent company did get one of the majors to distribute an album or even sometimes when a South African artist was recorded through a major, the sales reps did not necessarily promote it adequately. Gary Hertselman (Interview, 1998), who worked at Johannesburg's biggest independent record shop (Hillbrow Records) for part of the 1980s described a rather depressing scenario, fairly common within the industry:

Independent record companies would set up a distribution deal through the major companies. So that means that the major companies would distribute their records, the major companies would offer their records to all the shops, to all the retailers. And often I would have to ask. They would come and say, 'Well this is the new Lionel Richie, this is the Phil Collins, this is the Sade'. And I'd go, 'Is that all you've got this week?' And I would know, having been in touch with Shifty, and I'd say, 'Haven't you got a new girl called Jennifer Ferguson this week?' And they'd go, 'Oh ja, oh ja!' It's kind of in the bottom of their bag. So, no thanks to them for that.

In addition, retail outlets were careful not to import copies of albums or singles banned by the Directorate of Publications, given that they would face prosecution were they to be caught doing so.

More problematically, the workings of some of the major record company reps within apartheid South Africa were inefficiently racist. Mike Maswanganwa (Interview, 1999) of the black division of EMI (CCP) related how in the apartheid days:

There were no black reps. You couldn't become a representative. But you could become a driver. And drive the white rep with you. And what you do, you take

him around, you take out his cases, his samples, you put them on top of the table at the shop or wherever, you play samples to the person. And when you leave in the evening, you go to the hotel. The driver will go the backroom and he would have his food there, his breakfast there but in the morning he has to wake up, wash the rep's car and wait for the rep to come with the key and move. But now if you look at that, it was costly. Apartheid was really costly because it's taken two experienced people to do the same job.

It was within this context that South African musicians recorded their music and relied on distributors to get their music into the shops. It was at best unlikely that music recorded through independents would ever make it into the shops. Even local music released by the majors could possibly be relegated to the bottom of the recommended pile in favour of the latest release by popular overseas musicians. The struggle for musicians working through independent companies, in getting their music heard, usually involved doing a lot of marketing and selling personally, at gigs and through the post. Shifty regularly advertised a mail order service in fringe magazines and had people selling on their behalf in the main cities. But this approach only ever realized a slow trickle of sales. As a result most of the independent releases by Shifty and Third Ear, and some of those by Mountain, did not cover the costs of recording.

5.6 Live venues

An important outlet for musicians within a context of censorship as hitherto outlined, is live performance. Yet during the 1980s even live performances were sometimes severely restricted. In Chapter Four it was revealed that the police and local authorities often closely monitored live performances, so that the conditions under which live performances took place could be severely constrained. Pressure was placed on venue owners to monitor the sort of music and musicians promoted within their venues. Many live venues and festivals were private operations, with venue owners themselves liable for alleged law breaking within their venues. Acting within the restraints of apartheid legislation, venue owners who enforced many of the restrictions did so on a self-regulatory basis.

On occasion venue owners prohibited performances as a result of direct threats from the police. In the most extreme instances, the police would directly threaten venue owners. For example, (as outlined in Chapter Four) when police put teargas into the air-conditioning system at a Roger Lucey performance, security branch policeman, Paul Erasmus (Interview, 2002) explained that the police followed-up by using an informer network to determine Lucey's future performances, and used the teargas incident to threaten other venue owners.

An informer network also seems to have played a role in the cancellation of many (especially campus) venues originally scheduled for the alternative Afrikaans Voëlvry performances in 1989. Willem Möller (Interview, 1998) of the Gereformeerde Blues Band related that many of their gigs were cancelled:

You know, you rent the hall and suddenly the people say, 'No, we can't rent you the hall, you guys are too political'.

Lead singer of the Gereformeerde Blues Band, Johannes Kerkorrel (Interview, 1998) explained that:

We just started with the tour and we played two gigs. I think the one we played was at RAU. Immediately after we played at the Rand Afrikaans University, most of the tour was banned. We had several gigs lined up on campuses all over the country and all the Afrikaans campuses and technikons immediately banned the show and let us know that we cannot play on their campuses. Immediately after that we went ahead and just organized alternative venues in every town or city where we were banned.

The most notorious clash over cancelled Voëlvry venues was at Stellenbosch University where a large group of students protested the refusal of the University Administration to allow the Voëlvry concert to take place on campus. An alternative venue was found in town and the concert went ahead, despite having to set up in a hurry (Doxa, 1989).

Reacting to pressure from the Directorate of Publications and some public pressure, the organizers of Chris De Burgh's concerts in South Africa in 1978 persuaded De Burgh to provide an explanation of "Spanish Train" (see above) before performing the song live.

Far from responding to pressure from the police, the owners of the Johannesburg venue, Thunderdome, alerted the police when musician Steve Howells handed out End

Conscription Campaign (ECC) leaflets in their venue. Gary Rathbone of the Spectres (Interview, 1998) explained:

Steven (Howells) was playing with Khaki Monitor at the time and during the breaks he would start handing out ECC campaign leaflets. Now the Thunderdome was a sort of upmarket club at the time, and Lucky Gelakis ... saw this and he got a complete fit about this whole thing. He took Steven and locked him up and they called the police down there. So the police came down. The ECC wasn't strictly a banned organization so there wasn't anything they could really do except to harass him a bit. And then ... they kicked Steve out the club, and another friend of ours, Steve Bassier, went with Steve Howells. They started walking back to Yeoville, and then two bouncers came after them when they were about three or four blocks away from the club, and they beat the shit out of them.

Throughout the 1980s various venues remained racially segregated, even though petty apartheid laws had been relaxed. The stringent segregation of the 1980s no longer applied, yet many venues continued to discriminate against blacks. Jimmy Florence of the multi-racial Dynamics (Interview, 1998) described how:

When we played at the Chelsea Hotel on our record launch, they wouldn't let black folk dance on the floor. They were barely letting them into the place, and this was 1984. No man, that was just not acceptable really.

Musicians were therefore often put into the position of having to compromise their values in order to perform, or refuse to perform altogether.

Even when musicians performed live and could feasibly make a political stand or challenge their audiences politically, they often did not do so, for fear of reprisals. Danny De Wet (Interview, 1998), of pop band Petit Cheval, wanted to put a string of ECC chain-links across his drum kit as a display of support for the ECC (whose symbol was a string of chain links), but his friends persuaded him not to do so, because of likely police reaction. In a very honest act of self-reflection, singer David Kramer (Interview, 1998) summed up the element of fear which could beset any musician performing controversial songs before a broad (probably conservative) audience:

I think I've always been quite a cautious person. Again I think I'm not physically built for fighting. Let's put it like that. I'm a small guy and in a fight I'm not

going to come out the winner. So, I've always avoided confrontation with people and I suppose I've used my song-writing or my singing as a kind of a weapon, and the power that I feel on stage is psychologically related to that in any case, so being on stage gives me a tremendous thrill and I really like an audience to like me. I'm aware of that. So, I think that what I used to do in those years was try and read the audience as carefully as I could, to try and understand who I was playing to, and not become sort of silly about the songs I would choose to sing to people. So I had a large enough repertoire to be able to go out into the country and probably sing mainly Afrikaans songs, and then a few days later play in Johannesburg and, say at the Market Theatre, sing quite a different sort of a repertoire.

Kramer's selectivity in choice of songs in relation to the nature of the audience was also a means of being subversive, as he tried, by means of constantly repositioning himself, to find a balance between keeping to his own moral framework yet not alienating his audience. Within the latter response existed an element of fear, of having to deal with a hostile audience reaction, different and clearly more direct than the reaction of an audience to one's recorded material (see Chapter Seven for a more detailed analytical discussion of David Kramer's musical message).

Kramer's balancing act is indicative of the problem that was faced by musicians trying to bypass pressures to censor without being detected, reprimanded and suffering some form of retribution. They became entangled in a battle over external censorship which constantly threatened their creative process by virtue of self-censorship. What to write about and how and when to perform songs became central issues in the song writing, recording and performing processes.

5. 7. Self-censorship: musicians' complete avoidance of controversial content

The multi-faceted manner in which censorship of music occurred in South Africa, from government regulations to broadcast and record company level, ultimately impacted on individual musicians in a very personal way. Although censors were not ubiquitous, their paranoia pervaded society, affecting musicians wanting to avoid censorship, whatever the reason. Operating from what was clearly the political centre (a position of centralized

political power), the state censor hoped to foster conditions favourable to the dominant discourse. If all worked according to plan, songwriters would not wander outside of the prescribed framework. After all, for the state censors: "Self-control is, of course, the ideal form of control" (Van Rooyen, 1987: 4). On this most fundamental level, where censorship is manifested in the form of self-censorship, it pierces that most private of spaces, the writer's very body. In these instances the censor, according to J. M. Coetzee (1996: 10), operates "as a parasite, a pathogenic invader of the body-self" who attempts to penetrate that most personal of spaces, the self, in an attempt to infiltrate and pollute the very creative expressions of the writer. When this occurs, power exercised in favour of the dominant discourse is no longer centralized but is exercised on an individual level through self-policing. Musicians and writers who censor themselves do so on behalf of the censor, avoiding the necessity for external discipline.

Accordingly, censorship became self-censorship and external surveillance became self-surveillance. This was not a panoptical form of self-surveillance as a Foucault (1975: 195-228), constantly monitoring one's behaviour, but awareness that one's creative products would in all likelihood be scrutinized by a board of censors at the Directorate of Publications or SABC. The effect was to make the musician "not only a repressed person, but also a self-repressed one, not only a censored person, but a self-censored one, not only watched over, but one who watches over himself (sic)" (Reinaldo Arenas in Ripoll, 1985: 36).

The pressure to avoid being banned and to receive airplay often resulted in musicians deciding to avoid political and other controversial messages altogether. For example, Dizu Plaatjies explained how Amampondo:

Were a very fortunate group. We've never been arrested because of the politics and the messages that we were putting across to the people, because we didn't want to put ourselves in the position whereby we were right deep in politics. We had to be neutral. We had to accommodate the politicians and also we had to think of where we came from, because the country, we were not free you know, and you couldn't just say anything that you wanted.

It was common for musicians, especially black musicians, to silence their political voice so as not to jeopardize their career or even safety. David Marks (Interview, 1998) of Third Ear Music explained that:

Black guys were guarded for a good reason. The most they would do to a white guy is, which they often did, was fuck him up, slash his car tyres, drive him around a bit in the back of a van, like they did with Roger [Lucey]. But with black dudes it was life and death, you know.

Indeed, at least two black musicians were killed by the apartheid state. They were Vuyisile Mini, executed for sabotage acts and the murder of a police informer in November 1964, and his daughter Nomkhosi Mini, a founder member of Amandla, killed in a raid on Maseru, Lesotho in December 1985 (SACP homepage). However, neither of these deaths was directly related to the deceased's musical involvement. Yet the fear of death, arrest, and a long spell in detention, where one might be tortured, was very real. Also, in economic terms, for many black musicians there were few alternatives to turn to if their music careers were put to an end through censorship. Sipho Mchunu, for example, was a gardener in a white suburb in Johannesburg before becoming a successful musician with Juluka. Jabu Khanyile (Interview, 2001) of Bayete explained the necessity of some form of self-censorship for musicians lacking alternative sources of income:

I said to the guys, 'Guys, we are struggling. You can't live on rallies. Political organizations don't have money to support us. We play for free; they only give us what they can give. And we have families to support. I think that we can still keep the messages, but very harmless, but still the message is the same. So that you can do it to survive as well'.

While there were many white musicians who did not grasp or confront the problems of apartheid, the majority of those who did, and who sang about it, were able to fall back on alternative means of support (especially in the context of a middle class upbringing and sometimes a university education). As beneficiaries of apartheid, whites did not have anything immediate to gain by opposing apartheid (unless they were completely committed to and believed in the advantages of a post-apartheid society). To incorporate a phrase used by Heidi Hartmann (1979), they had more to lose than their chains.

Nevertheless, even for white musicians, to be commercially successful it was best to avoid controversial content.

There were many musicians who completely avoided political content in their lyrics. For some, avoidance of political content reflected an acceptance of the dominant discourse within South African society. For others, such as Ladysmith Black Mambazo (see Chapter Six for more detailed discussion), this was a strategic act of self-regulation, aimed at avoiding the consequences of censorship. Joseph Shabalala, leader of Ladysmith Black Mambazo (in Andersson, 1981: 87), declared that: "We keep the radio in mind when we compose. If something is contentious they don't play it, and then it wouldn't be known anyway". Timothy Taylor (1997: 82) hailed Ladysmith Black Mambazo's success as a victory, given that it took place within the severe constraints of apartheid. Yet the group's decision to silence themselves by avoiding 'the contentious' overshadowed the victory.

5.8 Conclusion

The threat of censorship from above and related repercussions clearly permeated the South African music industry and entire music context, impacting on the creative process on many levels. This chapter has considered avoidance of controversial content as part of a self-regulating censorship process practiced by independent radio stations, record companies, retailers, venue owners and musicians. In some instances institutions were both victim and perpetrator, as their decision to respond to pressure to curtail particular messages impacted on others. The independent radio stations' fear of government reprisals made them reluctant to play music with politically overt lyrics, which in turn impacted on record companies, retailers and musicians. Similarly, record company fears of censorship often led them to make cautious decisions, a response which impacted on musicians, as did decisions by retailers on what music to stock.

The issue of self-censorship is admittedly complex. What some musicians regarded as creative resistance to censorship others regarded simply as self-censorship. For this reason, the issue of musicians' self-censorship is closely linked to innovative lyrical resistance. A distinct dividing line between the actions cannot be conclusively drawn. It is argued that to do so would be to frame the action of musicians within the very sort of

complicit/resistant dichotomy this thesis wishes to discard. Self-censored music which includes protest, even obliquely or mildly, is a form of resistance, even if not overtly so. Strategic attempts to self-censor in order to slip contentious messages through the censorship maze are discussed in Chapter Seven.

Interestingly, not all calls for censorship came from government and conservative pressure groups. The next chapter considers calls for censorship from anti-apartheid groups. Musicians found themselves having to deal with political and moral arguments about what not to play or where not to perform in the interests of transforming South African society. Once again the debate opened up an area of contestation, in which musicians increasingly battled to get their music and message heard.

CHAPTER SIX

Anti-apartheid censorship

Sing no more love songs to me baby

("Lovesongs" (1993) — James Phillips and the Lurchers)

6.1 Introduction

The previous two chapters documented and discussed instances of government and self-regulating censorship. This chapter focuses on pressure placed on musicians to adhere to anti-apartheid political demands. The chapter begins with a discussion of political obligations and boycotts as forms of censorship, before considering particular calls for musicians to adhere to political demands. These calls dealt with the political stance of musicians, through lyrics and the adoption of a particular musical style. Thirdly, the call for a cultural boycott against South African music from anti-apartheid organizations and individuals is considered. Other instances of the boycott strategy as an anti-apartheid form of censorship are examined, particularly the government's Bureau for Information propaganda song.

6.2 The boycott as a form of censorship

There are two types of strategy regarded here as censorship although they have traditionally been distinguished from censorship because on a surface level they appear to involve different dynamics. The first of these strategies is that of the call for musicians to fulfil certain political and musical requirements — for example, to perform or avoid a particular style of music. The second of these strategies is the boycott — not to allow certain music to be distributed in parts of the world and/or prohibiting musicians from performing in certain places. In both cases a core aspect of censorship is present: the monitoring and control of creative work and, crucially, deliberation over whether or not pieces of music will be allowed to be listened to or performed in certain contexts, involving particular people. In other words, they entail restrictions on expression, movement and association.

The affect on the musician of the two strategies outlined is the same as that if censored. J. M. Coetzee (1996: 150) argues that the "censor's office creates a force field that affects all those working in proximity to it, whether or not they try to ignore it". Once cultural demands and boycotts are put into place they have an affect on the songwriter. They have *some* affect on the writer – putting pressure on him/her to conform, to submit to or at least consider the political and cultural considerations in question. Even the act of ignoring such constraints is different to writing completely outside of this context – it becomes an act of defiance, it is framed within the political dictates of those who made the call. Hence the musician becomes a 'boycott-buster' or is labelled 'conservative' and so on. There is no doubt that the cultural boycott and similar boycotts had this sort of impact on musicians – sometimes resulting in pressure being placed on the dissidents to make an official apology for not adhering to the demands of the boycott.

Perceiving boycotts as censorship is not new. Indeed, it was a concern of the ANC during the 1980s and was a criticism levelled at the strategy. For example, in a debate on the cultural boycott at the First Conference on South African English Literature in Bad Boll, Germany in 1986 one participant asked:

"If we are going to ... continue to tell people not to come and continue to tell people you are allowed to go there, aren't we then playing the role exactly that which is currently happening at home? Being sort of censors? ... Aren't we going to that danger of being censors?" (in Kriger (Ed.), 1987: 199).

Lewis Nkosi (in Kriger (Ed.), 1987: 200) acknowledged this perception. In response he said he was:

"extremely worried about any idea of setting up a board of censors or whatever we want to call it, that says so and so should not go; and if he/she goes, we are going to arrange solidarity groups to boycott the person abroad".

Yet this is exactly what happened. Karin Press (1990: 39) noted the UDF attempt to control cultural projects explicitly linked to the UDF's 'people's culture' campaign. For Press, the corollary of the UDF's sanctioning of 'people's culture' was a rejection of anything that did not fit in with the people's culture conception of culture or did not ally itself to the UDF. She argued that:

“The UDF, following the logic of its claim to be the only legitimate representative of that community, has asserted its right to make this decision on behalf of ‘the people’”.

Press likened this policy to that of the South African government’s refusal of passports to its political opponents.

It is evident that the practices outlined fit into the general definition of censorship as interfering with the freedom of expression, association and movement of musicians. There is no doubt that the blacklists, committees and other forms of pressure used by organizations such as the UN, British Musicians Union (BMU), Anti-Apartheid Movement (AAM), AZAPO, ANC and UDF comply with this description and that the cultural boycott therefore constitutes a form of censorship.

6.3 The call for musicians to perform politically relevant music

As from 1983 the UDF was the foremost political organization in South Africa. It served as the internal wing of the exiled ANC and political struggle was generally framed within the anti-apartheid struggle engaged by the UDF¹. Sarah Nuttall and Cheryl Ann Michael (1999: 56-57) argue that within this framework cultural studies was dominated by three major assumptions. These were “[1] the over-determination of the political, [2] the inflation of resistance and [3] the inflections given to race as a determinant of identity”. Accordingly, culture making was imagined in instrumentalist terms as cultural work undertaken on behalf of the community in opposition to the apartheid state. Within this approach almost exclusive precedence was given to race as a “vector of segregation” (Nuttall and Michael, 1999: 57), ignoring (or at least downplaying) other crucial areas of inequality/segregation. Other spaces of interaction within everyday life were ignored, with the corresponding ambiguities of “being together” and “shared epistemologies” (Nuttall and Michael, 1999: 57) that developed amongst South Africans. The dichotomous context within which the dominant political struggle was framed permeated the conceptualization of cultural studies in South Africa.

¹ Other resistance political organisations such as the PAC and AZAPO also focused on apartheid as their central target.

Peter Stewart (1986: 4) noted that in the early-to-mid 1980s both the ANC and AZAPO indeed advanced instrumentalist conceptions of culture: to be used either as an instrument to maintain the hegemony of apartheid interests, or progressively, in the political interests of the masses. In elaborating on this view he quotes Keorapetse Kgositse (in Stewart, 1986: 4) who argued that:

“The artist finds that he (sic) must choose sides. He can use his talent to entertain the rich and comfortable in places such as the Baxter, the Space, the Market, etc. Or else he can devote his talent to the many struggles of the poor and voiceless masses”.

By the mid-1980s organizations operating under the umbrella of the UDF began to put forward a counter-hegemonic viewpoint, calling for a ‘people’s culture’ which insisted that the task of progressive artists should be defined according to the paradigm of the ANC and UDF. For example, in a keynote address at a ‘People’s Culture’ Symposium in 1987, cultural activist Johnny Issel stressed the need for artists to “record the people’s experience of struggle” and warned against “dabbling with the abstract”. He argued that a true cultural worker refused to be a “weirdo” or a “gypsy” but worked instead in a “disciplined way” within the broad democratic movement (cited in Press, 1990: 27). Mzwakhe Mbuli, a strong advocate of the people’s culture position, spelt this out more clearly when he argued that:

“If we are poets, the beauty of poetry won’t be determined by its rhyme and rhythm but by the way it inspires the masses by its revelation; if we are painters or sculptors we won’t be producing landscapes or figures of abstraction, but we shall and can paint portraits that symbolise important aspects of our liberation struggle” (in Press, 1990: 40).

Vice-President of the South African Musicians’ Alliance, Johnny Clegg (Interview, 1998) explained the implications of this standpoint when he noted that:

The political implications of cultural activity were always at the forefront ... So you never had love songs. They’d say well, you can write a love song, but you must write about a love song in South Africa. How does love happen in South Africa?

Here Clegg's use of pronouns (in particular his reference to the movement in the third person) indicates a distancing of his own position from that of the movement. 'They' clearly come across as an autocratic cultural bureau (this becomes even more obvious in the discussion of the cultural boycott below). Failure to comply with 'their' approach to resistance placed you outside of that frame, on the other side, not for but against.

In terms of the dominant anti-apartheid discourse, musicians were located within one of two opposing sides around the struggle to either uphold or resist apartheid. Muff Andersson (1981: 176) best typifies this position when she argued that progressive songwriters needed to be responsible, by "not writing anything that in any way gives credence to the status quo". For example, it would be wrong to write about the glamour of fast city life when there are millions of starving people in the country. She argued that the choice of the lyricist is either "to view culture as something special with no political links, or to recognise that song as a cultural form must reflect the atmosphere of its society and let this be apparent in the content". Likewise, Robert Kavanagh (1985: xv) maintained that the revolutionary artist should "determine as far as possible that what he (sic) is creating becomes in fact an effective contribution to the revolutionary struggle". Similarly, Kgositsile (1982: 3) argued that "literature is a site of struggle; it must serve the interests of the people in their fight against a culture which insists that they should not be robbed". Gilder (1983: 22) drew a distinction between apartheid forces and "(a) new cultural resurgence ... in which progressive workers in all fields are beginning consciously to place their art in the camp of the national liberation struggle". Along similar lines, Jonas Gwangwa and Fulco van Aurich (1989: 146) conceptualized a "struggle for black South African musical identity against the poison of apartheid, and against the exploitation of white promoters and record companies, against the divide-and-rule policy of South African radio". Their approach was influenced by a resolution passed at the 1987 Culture in Another South Africa Conference (held in Amsterdam). The resolution recognized that "there has developed a vibrant people's music, rooted in South African realities and steeped in democratic values, in opposition to the racist music associated with the apartheid regime" (cited in Gwangwa and van Aurich, 1989: 157). Kerkhof (1989: 10) proffered a dichotomy between music as a tool in the hands of the oppressor and as a voice for the majority struggling for liberation. Accordingly, strategies

used by musicians were viewed as “fulfilling their task of producing art which is committed to the struggle for national liberation, and which thus reflects the aspirations of the oppressed people of South Africa”.

Importantly for this thesis, musicians who avoided political content were not simply left alone to do their own thing. A certain amount of pressure from within anti-apartheid lobby groups (depending on the musician and the context) was placed on musicians to make their stance concerning apartheid clear, especially through their lyrics. An example which demonstrates this tension involved the white pop-rock group Sweatband whose lead singer, Wendy Oldfield (Interview, 1998), was notoriously apolitical (or “politically naïve” as she termed it). She explained that:

(lead guitarist) John Marre was writing social awareness songs, I was the one writing all the love songs.

In response James Phillips of the Lurchers wrote “Lovesongs” (1993)² which, according to band member, Lee Edwards (Interview, 1998) was:

Written for Wendy Oldfield, but I guess it was a general thing for South African music about: why are you all singing these happy little, loving couple songs all the time? Why aren't you singing about something more?

Charles Hamm's (1989) attack on Ladysmith Black Mambazo is characteristic of the way the issue of avoiding political lyrics was approached by academics opposed to apartheid. Hamm's contestation forms part of a critique of Paul Simon's *Graceland* (1986) album. Hamm criticized Ladysmith Black Mambazo's involvement on the album as well as their earlier career moves in wholeheartedly oppositional terms. To begin with, he notes that the group:

“first performed on the SABC's Radio Zulu, one of the radio services established in 1960 to promote the neo-apartheid (sic) ideology of separate development, by stressing the tribal identity of each black ethnic group within the country as a deterrent to black unity” (Hamm, 1989: 299).

He interpreted this early exposure as collaboration with the system of apartheid, accusing them of benefiting:

² Recorded in 1993, but written in the 1980s.

“handsomely from *collaboration* with the SABC and South Africa’s internal domestic recording industry; they are *aligned* musically and politically with conservative black elements within South Africa”³ (Hamm, 1989: 300).

Moreover, Hamm criticized the band for making money out of its endeavours. He noted that:

“Simon’s patronage has helped them accumulate even more wealth, but it is difficult to imagine that either the group or its music will have any positive impact on the black struggle for liberation” (Hamm, 1989: 300).

The use of binary positions in Hamm’s critique is clear: as a black band performing in South Africa during apartheid, Ladysmith Black Mambazo should have “played and sang for the direct benefit of the liberation movement” (Hamm, 1989: 304). To do so, of course and in all probability, would have involved far less commercial success, but in Hamm’s view this was necessary in order to avoid the only alternative available to them, alignment with conservative political forces and collaboration with the SABC.

Timothy Taylor (1997: 78-82) provides a useful (Foucauldian) critique of the sort of binarization employed by Hamm. Taylor argues that to define musicians in terms of a resistance/complicity binarization is to accept “the very grounds of the oppressor/oppressed paradigm that European colonialism imposed”. Taylor (1997: 81) defended Shabalala, arguing that the inequality of apartheid presented many obstacles to aspirant black musicians, and to succeed despite these difficulties (lack of education, poverty, urban squalor and so on) was a form of resistance since it “defies the subservient position which whites made for blacks”. Taylor points out that Ladysmith Black Mambazo’s musical accomplishments indeed defied simple categorization as either complicit or resistant. To celebrate all aspects of human life despite apartheid also formed part of a struggle to live the kind of life to which all people ought to have a right. Shabalala’s success – in a sense – involved a refusal to engage with apartheid, a refusal to allow it to infiltrate every corner of their consciousness.

Taylor (1997: 83) argues that despite existing in a highly political environment, Shabalala transcended the system’s analytic categories by attaining the high standards of art which Ladysmith Black Mambazo achieved and by characterizing this quest “as a

³ My emphasis.

powerful desire to make the best music possible while never mentioning politics” (Taylor, 1997: 83). Taylor (1997: 83) maintains that “Shabalala’s efforts to conceive and realize a music based on his dreams and desires appear to be a way of operating outside of the political”⁴. Importantly, in an interview quoted by Taylor (1997: 84) Shabalala revealed that there were other areas of power to be explored outside of the immediate complicit/resistance binary. For example, the fact that they sang in Zulu so that many whites could not understand what they were singing and the celebration of their cultural and musical roots could be regarded as a way to empower themselves through their music.

However, the SABC did exploit Ladysmith Black Mambazo’s music in promoting the notion of separate development. Furthermore, Shabalala’s statement concerning radio play points to a deliberate decision to silence his own political voice in the face of censorship by the SABC. Despite all that is triumphant about his music and success, his silence points to defeat. But this does not mean that he was a supporter of apartheid, or that he was a collaborator with the government.

Situating musicians in the binary framework adopted by Hamm stemmed from the fierce contest that developed as a result of the essentialist (in terms of race and ethnicity) and politically conservative stance of the SABC in promoting the apolitical songs and indigenous styles of music preferred by the Radio Bantu services. Some anti-apartheid politicians and cultural workers called on musicians to avoid compliance with the apartheid regime by avoiding traditional styles that they began to label ‘conservative’.

Yet these arguments took place during the simultaneous process of acculturation in which neo-traditional South African musical styles were influenced by those of (especially) Britain and the United States (see Frith [1987: 71] for further discussion on this process of acculturation). This was a broader part of the process that began with colonization, whereby indigenous music, language, customs, dress, beliefs and other aspects of culture were “mummified” (Fanon, 1970: 44), derided as inferior, barbaric, uncivilized and in need of civilization. Indeed, this is precisely why the SABC courted traditional African music on its Bantu Radio services: to promote the cultures of black

⁴ Shabalala’s position was paralleled by that of the Plastic People of the Universe who neither participated in Czechoslovakian state propaganda nor protested. Popular musicians throughout communist countries adopted similar approaches in the 1970s and 1980s (see for example Street, 1986: 25).

South Africans as inferior and different. Despite state attempts to promote indigenous music in this way, many black musicians nevertheless felt that it was important to promote neo-traditional styles in order to preserve their musical heritage (see discussion below). A complex debate ensued concerning politically and culturally acceptable music. It did not help that the state capitalized on any opportunity it thought would further the cause of racialized separate development, causing the debate to be continually shrouded in fears and accusations of 'selling out'.

An example of this sort of critique is found in Christopher Ballantine's reaction to the demise of the 1950s jazz era and a rise in the simpler mbaqanga style of music.

Ballantine (1997: 2-3) criticized this transition by arguing that:

"musically it was nearly impossible to open up any creative spaces within the rigid, anodyne, formula-based styles fostered by the SABC's black radio stations. African musicians soon coined a term for the bouncy new popular music, mass-produced by the studios with the help of able but guileless musicians from the countryside: derogatorily, they called it *msakazo* ('broadcast'). As if to symbolize the new musical order, Mahlatini – one of its first commercial products – appeared in animal skins, and sang of the virtues of tribal life. Music had become ideology".

The problem with Ballantine's position (which is similar to that put forward by Charles Hamm discussed above) is that it conflates a plethora of issues into a single political issue. In arguing that "music had become ideology" he suggests that record companies, "guileless" musicians, the SABC and state colluded in supporting apartheid's policy of separate development. Mass produced music was thus seen as a political product rather than related to shifts in recording technology elsewhere in the world. Furthermore, the fact that some musicians expressed their identity through rural, tribal ties is seen solely as political, on the lines of a simple for-or-against-apartheid dichotomy, rather than as a complexity of issues related to personal, cultural, social and political identity. Songs in favour of family bonds and ties to the land sung by the likes of the Soul Brothers, Mahlatini and Ladysmith Black Mambazo took place within a context of increased proletarianization. This involved the withering away of the extended family and the breakdown of family ties as a result of the government's influx control laws and a

deterioration of the rural economy. City life began to erode these more rural traditions. Many of these musicians were concerned with the erosion of traditional life. For example Moses Ngwenya (Interview, 1998) of the Soul Brothers explained that the group mostly performed:

love songs and family songs, like telling the children to respect the elders and the elders to respect the children as well.

Clearly the problem was one of context. Very few would criticize such sentiments in present day South Africa or in any other postcolonial society. But given the system of apartheid with its political separation of rural and urban economies and tribal ideology, musicians whose music fitted into this scheme had acted in a way which could be referred to as 'unstrategically essentialist' (as opposed to Gayatri Spivak's [1993] term 'strategic essentialism'), where to advocate core tribal values at a time when such values played into the state's hands was not politically strategic. Ballantine's view (one shared by Charles Hamm) can be seen to have been in favour of the adoption of George Lipsitz's 'strategic anti-essentialist' position whereby musicians "become 'more themselves' by appearing to be something other than themselves" (Lipsitz, 1994: 63). Unlike Spivak's notion of 'strategic essentialism' according to which, under certain circumstances, people might choose to emphasize their common history and interests in order to build unity around common needs, Lipsitz argues that it is sometimes strategically important for groups to emphasize their links to a broader community as a means of strengthening their position. For Lipsitz (1994: 64) it is important "not to collapse the complex and plural practices of people's lives into one-dimensional ethnic or racial identifications". This was certainly true for opponents of apartheid who did not want South African society to be viewed in the ethnic and racial terms propagated by the apartheid state.

It is most likely for this reason that Ballantine saw the strongly American-influenced township jazz of the 1950s as being qualitatively superior to the mbaqanga that followed it. Notice that Ballantine's criticism of mbaqanga (as compared to jazz) is both politically and (integrally) musically based. For Ballantine (1997: 1-2), the South African jazz of which he speaks was forged by countless black bands

"who flourished in the cities and ghettos, modelling themselves at times on jazz bands and jazz styles of the United States, but ultimately – through a synthesis of

indigenous musical traditions with American ones – producing a kind of jazz that was uniquely black South African”.

The strength of this music, for Ballantine, is emphasized in an excellent discussion by Ulf Hannerz. According to Hannerz (1994: 192), the people of Sophiatown incorporated aspects of world culture, such as novels by Joyce and American jazz and films, into their own culture, partly as a means of resisting the apartheid government’s attempts to insert “barriers of discontinuity into the cultural continuum of creolization”. Thus aspects of overseas culture were used by the residents of Sophiatown to foster a “cosmopolitan esthetic” which acted as a form of local resistance and as a yardstick (of the best of the world) against which “the mediocrity of virtually everything South African” could be measured, displaying a level of (subversive) sophistication. Importantly, in terms of strategic anti-essentialism, the incorporation of American jazz drew symbolic links between South African and American black musicians. In the mid-to-late 1980s South African musician Lucky Dube drew on themes of liberation evoked by reggae music to forge links between the experiences and antecedents of blacks the world over. Likewise, Sipho Mabuse (Interview, 1998) indicates how one of his bands, Harari, used music to express their political sentiments as black South Africans:

The black consciousness era was an exploratory era for us in that there was this self-realization, self-discovery of who we were and what we needed to do with our music. We started exploring quite a number of sounds, and different types of music.

Harari incorporated both African and Western influences in their music but did feel a resistance towards Western music, instilled in them through their acceptance of the message of black consciousness. Harari’s stance emphasizes the group’s active role as cultural producers, creating something qualitatively new out of Western influences. The importance of the Western influences was dependent on the new context, rather than on the meaning attributed to these influences in their original context. In walking a tightrope between ‘musical conservatism’ and loss of cultural identity, Harari avoided the antagonism of members of anti-apartheid groups who attacked the likes of Mahlatini. It surely was a time in which strategic anti-essentialism was strategic! And it would

certainly be convenient to sum up the conflict over musical styles as one of mere strategy. But it has been argued, the problem was more complex, involving conflicting contexts.

The strategies adopted by musicians (not only in terms of musical style, but also lyrics) were the result of their own entangled sense of identity, allegiance and past influences. For example, the Soul Brothers had grown up with and admired the mbaqanga sounds of Mahlatini and thus wanted nothing more than to do the same. Johnny Clegg was enchanted by the Zulu culture which he encountered on the mines in Johannesburg and explored it further, linking it to the Celtic folk influence of his colonial upbringing. Abdullah Ibrahim was influenced by the Western Cape 'Coon carnival' music of his youth and the jazz of the likes of Ellington, Monk and Coltrane with whom he interacted when he was living in exile. The styles adopted by these musicians stemmed naturally from their experiences as they developed as musicians. All of these hybrid styles of music are now regarded as being important parts of South Africa's musical heritage.

Once again this seems to point to the complexity of the cultural/political context and all the elements which make up the individual performer. This is borne out by the position of Gwangwa and van Aurich who expressed the cultural and political importance of mbaqanga while Ballantine strongly attacked it. Gwangwa and van Aurich (1989: 146) viewed mbaqanga music as "non-biased and authentic South African music expressing the pride and the intransigence of black South African musicians". Similarly, Kerkhof (1989: 15) argued that South African musicians needed to play "a form of music indigenous to South Africa" (such as mbaqanga⁵) with lyrics "of relevance to the local situation". For Gwangwa and van Aurich and Kerkhof, it was sufficient that mbaqanga was black South African music, in some way reflecting black African roots, rural and township life. Not only was mbaqanga moulded into something that suited the SABC, but it in turn was moulded by audiences, who gave it a different meaning which reflected their lives and their struggle to survive.

During the apartheid era, the question of cultural autonomy was an important one, reflecting the local interests of a diverse array of South African musicians. This was crucial in a society where many voices were silenced, or where voices were drowned out by the more powerful voices of others. Although the process of imperialism was not a

⁵ Kerkhof's example.

one-sided, one-way relationship, it challenged the culture of the colonized on all fronts. And although the link between music and locality is a fairly nebulous indicator of identity and difference, this link "is a vital one, which serves as an increasingly important means of describing popular music produced outside the dominant Anglo-American modes and trade routes" (Mitchell, 1996: 89). There is therefore a place within local culture for music (and other areas of culture) to voice local interests and concerns, and to forge an identity which reflects a community's lived experiences and struggles.

Situating themselves within the context of an unequal relationship between the local and the global was never going to be a simple matter for South African musicians, and therefore, as Best (1997: 19) contends "contemporary theorizing of popular culture must recognize the contradictory nature of popular cultural products, in that they can be the site of both hegemonic and counter-hegemonic ideological production depending on the context of their reception or production".

Black musicians in South Africa particularly felt the contradictory nature of this struggle. Not only were they involved in a struggle to reflect their own cultural interests and heritage in the face of cultural domination, but sometimes the very cultural interests they sought to express simultaneously fostered the interests of the apartheid state. This contestation inevitably resulted in contradictory demands being placed on musicians. Ultimately, it was up to the musicians themselves to make known their credentials, especially when sceptics labelled the style of their music as conservative and complicit with the very system that oppressed them. As is indicated in Chapters Seven and Eight, musicians explored various ways of doing this, primarily through lyrics and live performance. Many musicians opted for particular paths because it was what they in any case wanted to do, but there were others who felt compelled to follow the directives of one pressure group or another. In these instances it is clear that a form of censorship took place in which musicians did not feel free to record or perform the music they might have wanted to. Although the consequences of failing to adhere to the directives of anti-apartheid groups were different to those of the apartheid state and co-operating institutions, they nevertheless could be severe. This is clearly borne out in the ensuing discussion of boycott strategies.

6.4 The boycott strategy: the cultural boycott

In 1954 Anglican clergyman and anti-apartheid activist, Father Trevor Huddleston, made a call for a cultural boycott of South Africa according to which cultural performers would refuse to play in a racist South Africa (Nixon, 1994: 157). In 1957 the BMU followed the lead set a year earlier by the British Actors' Union – Equity – who decided that its members would not perform before segregated audiences in South Africa. The effects of BMU's stance was clearly seen in 1964 for example, when the Rolling Stones called off their scheduled tour of South Africa (Braam and Geerlings, 1989: 174) and in 1968 when Gram Parsons quit the Byrds when they refused to call off their planned trip to South Africa (Denselow, 1989: 58-59). The boycott began to gain international recognition when, in December 1968, the United Nations General Assembly accepted Resolution 2396, according to which all member states and organizations were asked to cut "cultural, educational and sporting ties with the racist regime" (Willemsse, 1991: 24). Attempts to actually impose the cultural boycott intensified after the Soweto uprising of June 1976. The ANC (externally) and AZAPO (internally) were the primary advocates of the cultural boycott (Stewart, 1986: 4). By December 1980 the call had been stepped up (in terms of UN General Assembly Resolution 35/206E) through the establishment of a 'Register of Artists, Actors and Others who have performed in South Africa'. In the early 1980s the strongest support for the boycott within South Africa came from AZAPO who facilitated the drawing up of a list of visiting musicians and entertainers in 1981. Although AZAPO was a minority oppositional group in South Africa, it was the most influential representative of black consciousness orthodoxy, and it did, to some extent, influence the political landscape of the early 1980s, especially through its wholehearted support of the cultural boycott (Lodge, 1983: 344-346).

The issue came to the fore in October 1980 when Ray Charles proposed a concert in Soweto on the third anniversary of the banning of a variety of black consciousness organizations, which took place in the wake of the Soweto uprising in 1976 and the death of Steve Biko in 1977. The Congress of South African Students (COSAS) and AZAPO called for the concert to be cancelled. A spokesperson said, "We are not willing to accept Ray's noise. We are in mourning" (Anti-Apartheid News, June 1981: 11). Interestingly COSAS and AZAPO's stance illustrates Balliger's (1995: 13-14) point that defining

certain sounds as noise is an ideological decision. This illustrates the power of naming. Charles' music was derided, was not regarded as music, because of his perceived political position (this fits in with the dogmatic political categorization of acceptable/unacceptable music discussed earlier in this chapter). In this instance, the site of the performance – the stadium – became an ideological battleground, as to whether or not the performance (and what it symbolizes) took place. Jacques Attali (in Balliger, 1995: 14), in arguing that “music and noises in general, are stakes in games of power” emphasizes the importance of music in political struggles. Here Charles was seen to be at the very least unsympathetic to the cause of black South Africans. His actions were seen to support the apartheid regime, and consequently COSAS and AZAPO did not stop with their criticism of him, but also belittled his music, the essence of his musicianship, as an integral part of their attack on his political insensitivity. The act of defining his music as noise was integral to their attack: his music was noise *because and only because* of his alleged political insensitivity.

AZAPO's approach was to seek meetings with artists planning to tour South Africa in an attempt to dissuade them from doing so while apartheid still remained in tact. For AZAPO the boycott strategy was one of the few strategies available to anti-apartheid activists. In a press statement AZAPO called upon black South Africans “to make the sacrifice of boycotting performances by foreign artists”, arguing that “no nation has or ever will achieve liberation without lifting a finger. Certain pleasures must thus be sacrificed for the greater goal of liberation” (Anti-Apartheid News, June 1981: 11). And in an appeal to overseas musicians in April 1981, AZAPO (in Anti-Apartheid News, September 1982:6) stated that:

“We are doing our spring cleaning and we do not want people to be moving in and out of this country. We want our black brothers in America to come back when we have cleaned the house. Right now the country stinks, it is full of muck and filth. Granted, most of them are talented in the field of music and are regarded as heroes by our people, but must they stoop so low by siding with the enemy of humanity?”

Overseas organizations (most notably the AAM) were eager to embrace any South African anti-apartheid organization which endorsed and thereby legitimized their own

support for a boycott strategy. Therefore AZAPO's stance was promoted and supported by pro-boycott organizations, regardless of AZAPO's support base within South Africa,

The form of cultural boycott that developed out of the efforts of lobby groups including AAM, AZAPO, the ANC and PAC in the early 1980s was a blanket one. It prohibited foreign musicians from playing in South Africa and prevented South African musicians from performing, recording or releasing their music outside of South Africa unless they went into exile or no longer performed in South Africa. The AAM was one of the organizations to call for a total boycott, based on the argument that the success of total boycotts lies in their very consistency. Selective boycotts required the adoption of criteria that are not easily understood by the public. Furthermore, selective boycotts would lead to political wrangling over who was permitted to perform and under what conditions. Interestingly, the AAM thought this would lead to "numerous accusations of political censorship" (Anti-Apartheid News, April 1987: 11), as if a blanket boycott somehow was not a form of political censorship. Nevertheless, the AAM's underlying argument, held by most proponents of a total boycott, was that a selective approach would lead to a weakening of the campaign to totally isolate apartheid South Africa (Anti-Apartheid News, April 1987: 11). In further support of a blanket boycott, Lewis Nkosi (cited in Hanlon and Omond, 1987: 124) argued that overseas musicians should not be allowed into South Africa, even if they were prepared to challenge the apartheid state. Nkosi seriously doubted the ability of music to affect change. He argued that: "It is difficult to see how a state as powerful as South Africa can be brought down by a rhyming couplet" (in Hanlon and Omond, 1987: 124).

This negative view of the ability of music to foster change is different to that which the apartheid state evidently held. Stewart (1986: 3) noted that the boycott and state censorship were similar in the sense that both led to restrictions on the distribution and reception of culture. However, he argued that they emanated from contrasting conceptions of the value of culture. While state censorship tacitly acknowledged the power of culture by censoring, an important implication of the blanket boycott posits the futility of culture to affect political change. This futility was not intrinsic to culture in general, but it was within the South African context where culture's capacity to critically challenge the status quo (in the face of state repression and the intransigence of white

South Africans) was limited. This view is clearly extremely negative, downplaying the potential for resistance in the face of state repression. Nevertheless, until 1987 the blanket boycott remained in place, as it was easier to administer and simpler to explain.

6.4.1 The Sun City boycott

Support for the boycott in the West grew with the release of the *Sun City* (1985) album released in 1985 by a collective of musicians calling themselves Artists United Against Apartheid. Given that most top musicians were not prepared to perform in South Africa, the Sun City holiday resort in Bophutatswana exploited the homeland's 'independence' to attract a host of international musicians to perform in South Africa. The album was an attempt to create awareness about apartheid and in particular to call for a boycott of performances by musicians at the Sun City holiday complex in the 'phoney homeland' of Bophutatswana.

The significance of the Sun City resort to the apartheid government must not be downplayed. With the growing international isolation of South Africa the resort became a crucial tool in the fight against the cultural boycott. In the early 1980s when it was increasingly difficult to attract musicians to South Africa, Bophutatswana's fake independence and Southern Sun Hotel's large sums of money were used to lure overseas musicians to perform in a part of South Africa. The regular appearance of top international musicians at Sun City in the early 1980s prevented complete isolation of South Africa and was a serious blow to the effectiveness of the cultural boycott. Musicians appearing at Sun City between 1980 and 1985 included Elton John, Leo Sayer, Cliff Richard, Gloria Gaynor, Chicago, Rick Wakeman, Cher, Kenny Rogers, Dolly Parton, George Benson, Frank Sinatra, Queen, Shirley Bassey, Barry Manilow, David Essex and Rod Stewart (Wilkinson, 1990: 12-13). In an attempt to stem this flow, (Little) Steven Van Zandt initiated the *Sun City* album. The purpose of the album was to educate and conscientize musicians and audiences, particularly through the title track "(I ain't gonna play) Sun City" (1985) on which a variety of top international singers participated, including Bob Dylan, Pete Townsend, David Ruffin, Bruce Springsteen, Bobby Womack, Nona Hendryx, Miles Davis, Linton Kwesi Johnson, Peter Gabriel, Kurtis Blow and Jimmy Cliff. The first verse introduced its purpose:

We're rockers and rappers united and strong
We're here to talk about South Africa we don't like what's going on
It's time for some justice it's time for the truth
We've realized there's only one thing we can do
I ain't gonna play Sun City

The album included other anti-apartheid songs performed by the likes of Peter Gabriel, Bono and Gil Scott-Heron. Following the release of the album, and to add to its momentum, Dali Tambo (son of the then ANC President, Oliver Tambo) and Jerry Dammers (of the Specials and Special A.K.A.⁶) founded a United Kingdom-based organization called Artists Against Apartheid (AAA) in April 1986. The purpose behind AAA was to specifically focus on the role played by those working in the entertainment industry in propping up apartheid. AAA pushed for the complete cultural isolation of South Africa. This was based on an awareness of how desperate the apartheid regime was to win the acceptance of the rest of the world, and wanted to use international artists to prove this acceptance. An important part of AAA's work was to dissuade artists from performing at Sun City. Tambo was quoted as saying:

"White South Africans are desperate for things like European pop records which make them feel that their way of life is normal. Pop music and similar leisure products help keep the minority's heads in the sand. Don't help them keep their morale up" (Anti-Apartheid News, June 1986: 11).

The effect of the *Sun City* (1985) title track and album and related initiatives was almost immediate, with far fewer musicians playing in Sun City in the latter half of the decade, and many of those who previously had done so pledged not to do so again (and thereby had their names removed from the list). For example, in early 1986 Anti-Apartheid News (January/February 1986: 10) reported that:

"The trickle of boycott-busting stars applying to have their names removed from the UN cultural register is likely to become a flood now that Elton John has made a clear statement that he will never return to South Africa while the apartheid system remains".

⁶ In 1984 Dammers wrote The Special A.K.A.'s "(Free) Nelson Mandela" (1984), which became a number one single in the U.K. charts.

Others to have their names removed after making similar pledges included Dolly Parton, Rod Stewart and the members of Queen (Anti-Apartheid News, May 1987: 11; Denselow, 1989: 193).

Those who did perform at Sun City were heavily criticized, even by the South African press, as was the case with South African band Ella Mental. Ironically, Van Zandt had worked on the production of an Ella Mental single when he was in South Africa finding out about the political situation. In late 1985 Ella Mental were to be the support act for Bucks Fizz, but when Bucks Fizz pulled out after pressure in the wake of the Sun City album, Ella Mental were approached to headline the show. Under intense pressure from their manager and in the midst of personal issues (the lead singer Heather Mac had just given birth to her first child) they went ahead with the concert. Lead guitarist Tim Parr (Interview, 1998) was particularly upset. Admitting to being politically naïve, he was annoyed that Van Zandt had not even phoned them to warn them not to play. Lead vocalist Heather Mac (Interview, 1998) revealed that their manager persuaded them to do the show, arguing that they were South African, and therefore the boycott did not apply to them.

Black Sabbath were banned from a Dutch concert hall in Tilburg when the owner heard that they had played at Sun City in 1987 (Anti-Apartheid News, December 1987: 15). In 1988 Modern Talking and Laura Branigan were the only overseas musicians to perform at Sun City, and in 1989 the only musicians to do so were Irene Cara and (once again) Laura Branigan. The Sun City campaign, with the support of groups like AAA and the Special Committee Against Apartheid of the United Nations had successfully ended the steady flow of musicians to South Africa.

6.4.2 South African musicians and the cultural boycott

Although some South African musicians (including Ella Mental and Leslie Rae Dowling) performed at Sun City, many supported the boycott insofar as they refused to perform at Sun City. For example, in a slightly exaggerated recollection, Wendy Oldfield (Interview, 1998) explained how:

Nobody went to Sun City, none of the musicians. We all stood by sanctions and supported them. We didn't go to see artists when they came out. It was quite hard

actually, because there were quite a lot of nice bands coming out to Sun City and we were advised by management that it was out of bounds completely, so all the musicians sort of stuck with it.

However, few musicians agreed with the ban on South African groups from performing and releasing their music overseas, either because they were not sufficiently politically involved or because they were, and wanted their message to be heard overseas.

Furthermore, and crucial to this thesis, the cultural boycott made it very difficult for South African bands to make a living from their music, especially those whose music had been banned by the Directorate of Publications and/or the SABC. Musicians were caught in a process of double censorship, from within and outside the country. For example, successful South African band Via Afrika went over to the United States in 1985 to promote their music and were very popular: their performances were sold out, they received strong interest from record companies and were interviewed on CNN. In one of the many contradictions of the boycott they also appeared (along with another South African band, the Malapoets) on the *Sun City* album. Yet, as band member Renee Veldsman (Interview, 1998) explained:

The record companies came around, and said 'This is great, but we can't actually help you because of the policy of your country, you could wait', ...but our record company couldn't help us and well, nobody could help us at that point. So that's actually why Via Afrika dissolved really, because we wanted to push forward, but we did hit walls all the time.

This sort of experience was the same for most other South African musicians who ever made it as far as an overseas record company interview. For example, Neil Solomon (Interview, 1998) was told that he could not be signed because he was South African even though his album, *The Occupant* (1981), was critically acclaimed in *Billboard Magazine* in 1981.

The general attitude therefore was to not even bother. Tom Fox (Interview, 1998) of the successful band (within the South African rock scene), Bright Blue summed up this position when he said that they:

never even contemplated it really. I think the record companies at that point would occasionally speak to somebody overseas but they were treated like lepers. So there just really wasn't a chance.

One of the effects of the cultural boycott was indeed to isolate white South African musicians. The theme of being the outcasts, the lepers of the music world, was felt by many white musicians. Jonathan Handley (Interview, 1998) expressed the bleakness of the situation most severely:

We were white apologists. Definitely. Going overseas, going to England, if you said you were South African it was immediately a sort of unclean thing to say, you know: 'I've got leprosy or I've got a contagious disease and I'm a white South African and we oppress blacks'. And DJs couldn't play our music, so the one trend was towards increasing isolation.

This was even the case for a white band like the Cherry Faced Lurchers who were strongly anti-apartheid in their stance, in terms of supporting anti-apartheid festivals and in their overt lyrics – and they recorded on the progressive Shifty label. Band member Lee Edwards (Interview, 1998) explained how:

Shifty were connected with the Swedes who were interested in a lot of the Shifty stuff, but I think there was a definite sense because of where the struggle was at that time, that people weren't very interested in a white band coming over from South Africa.

The Cherry Face Lurchers were hoping to perform at the Culture in Another South Africa (CASA) anti-apartheid conference in Amsterdam in 1987, but were turned down in favour of black bands like the Genuines and the less politically overt African Jazz Pioneers. Despite the fact that black performers were preferred to white performers for the CASA conference, Gwangwa and van Aurich (1989: 157) described the event as:

“an avalanche of sounds against apartheid, and it did not matter whether you were white or black, came from South Africa or had been in exile for years. This was South African music for you, the way it was meant to be, without apartheid having a grip on it any longer”.

However, this was not the message that got through to white anti-apartheid bands like the Cherry Faced Lurchers. Black musicians and crossover bands had easier access to

overseas performances than did white bands. Sipho Mabuse even secured a recording contract with Virgin Records in the mid-'80s, while some of Shifty's black musicians (for example Mzwakhe Mbuli) were released by overseas record labels, including Rounder Records. Musicians such as Savuka, Mango Groove, Steve Kekana and Amampondo performed overseas regularly.

Some white musicians, although frustrated by international rejection, nevertheless accepted their situation. Gary Rathbone (Interview, 1998) outlined the pro-cultural boycott position in the strongest terms:

Sure it was a shit deal for us. But the bigger picture was much more worth it than any sort of problems that we might have had, like some people whining and saying 'Oh I lost my career because of it'. You say, well jeez some people, a lot of people, lost their lives and their families. Never mind your bloody career for God's sakes. Most of those people who whined about how they lost their music careers are probably now comfortably ensconced in comfortable advertising executive jobs and things like that. So I don't know what the fuck they were whining about.

Similarly, Steve Louw (Interview, 1998) of All Night Radio and Big Sky, in discussing the lack of success experienced by South African bands in South Africa made the point that:

There were millions of people letting the government murder people and not doing anything. So you can't really moan too much because they didn't buy your record! You know, there was organized murder going on! I mean, apartheid was happening with the white people's stamp of approval. So, those are the people we're dealing with. You can't really say 'AND they didn't buy my record!'

Although the bigger picture was undoubtedly more important and far more sobering, musicians looking for creative outlets did feel frustrated and at times hard done by when they were deprived of opportunities to at least perform overseas. This was especially the case for musicians who were opposed to apartheid. Carl Raubenheimer (Interview, 1998) spoke about how his band at the time, Teenage Botha and the Blacks, were invited to perform at an anti-apartheid concert in Austin, Texas:

They were looking for South African bands to go and play anti-apartheid songs, and we had anti-apartheid songs. And so we were very, very keen and we had some guy come around to listen to us, who wanted us to go and do the thing. And then we heard later that he'd been told in no uncertain terms by Steve Gordon – who had then made himself into God – that the cultural boycott was still in place and that no South African bands were going to play in Austin Texas. So we seriously thought about breaking Steve Gordon's knees, but we didn't get a chance. The other guy chickened out because of course PC's much stronger than rock 'n' roll.

The fact that some anti-apartheid bands were prohibited from performing outside the country, and overseas protest musicians were prevented from performing in South Africa, essentially removed an important aspect of cultural struggle from the political contest. Musician Warrick Sony (Interview, 1998) argued that:

I didn't really support the whole idea of a cultural boycott... I supported the sports boycott because I think that hurt, but ... I think of how much I've learnt from listening to records and so on. For people like Billy Bragg not to have had their records available in South Africa is ridiculous. It is. He's not a huge seller but his ideas needed to come here.

SAMA President, Mara Louw (Interview, 2001) agreed that overseas musicians should not have been unilaterally shut out:

I would have preferred if any artist who came over here, would come, go into the township and go and teach, spend a month at a school and contribute somehow, but not come here and take the bucks and go like Millie Jackson, you know, 'I've just come for the gold'. But people like Jimmy Cliff. He went to Soweto. He went right inside the township and he wanted to perform for the people in the township, not in some posh theatre in town. So that's why I thought something's not right.

Notwithstanding Nkosi's views about the inefficacy of rhyming couplets (above), Stewart (1986: 5) agreed that the critical challenge of culture was important. He argued that the potential for culture to challenge the state had not been entirely eradicated by state repression and censorship, but that there was a danger that the additional effects of the cultural boycott could cripple South African culture. Stewart (1986: 5) argued that:

“While there can be no doubt that South African artists can only rise to their full stature once the shackles of apartheid have been removed, one must not, in one’s haste, jeopardize what one seeks to preserve ... to hold culture on a leash is to strangle our visions”.

The sentiments expressed by Sony and Stewart are reflective of debates concerning the release of records and live performance of overseas musicians in South Africa and South African musicians overseas. For musicians engaged in counter-hegemonic struggle it was believed that a blanket cultural boycott was counterproductive. It was felt that spaces needed to be found within which cultural struggle could take place, rather than simply close doors on musicians.

6.4.3 The censorial effect of the cultural boycott

As a result of increased debate about the strategic purpose of barring anti-apartheid musicians from performing overseas, changes in the blanket nature of the boycott were introduced. Johnny Clegg (Interview, 1998), himself a victim of the cultural boycott (as discussed below), was among those who argued that there was:

A difference between the culture of the oppressed masses and the culture of the ruling elite.

Accordingly, it did not make sense to apply the boycott to the culture of the masses. Clegg argued that only the culture of the ruling elite should be boycotted. This position is itself not without problems. For example did the music of Peter Gabriel (who sang “Biko” [1980] and “No More Apartheid” [1985]) and U2 (who sang the anti-apartheid “Silver and Gold” [1988]) belong to the culture of the masses or the elite? Certainly when U2 performed in South Africa in the late ’90s the audiences comprised predominantly middle class whites. This would not have been different in the 1980s. However, if allowed to perform in the country (and assuming they would have wanted to) these musicians could have directly challenged the audiences, transforming the concert arena into a contested terrain. However, it is doubtful whether the government would have permitted this. This point is interestingly illustrated by an incident involving Cliff Richard, who repeatedly performed in South Africa, “to bring Jesus into people’s hearts and thus change them and society” (Anti-Apartheid News, October 1984: 10). At a

protest against Richard's boycott breaking in England in July 1986, one protester asked him if he could introduce P. W. Botha to Jesus. Richard ignored the question. Asked if he would ask for the release of Nelson Mandela during his forthcoming visit to South Africa in January 1985, Richard responded, "I couldn't do that because then I wouldn't be allowed to return to South Africa any more" (Anti-Apartheid News, October 1984: 10).

Paul Simon's decision to record part of his *Graceland* (1986) album in South Africa, was highly controversial, and led to a rethinking of the total boycott strategy. Simon was criticized for going to South Africa without clearance from the relevant monitoring organizations such as the UN and the ANC (although he did consult prominent anti-apartheid musicians such as Harry Belafonte). He argued that he had not strictly broken the boycott because he had not performed in South Africa. Simon's refusal to condemn apartheid in the lyrics or in a message on the album cover further angered many anti-apartheid activists and academics (see for example Hamm, 1989). Simon tried to squirm his way out of his apolitical stance by arguing that:

"I am not a South African and cannot choose, as a public personality, a specific political party in South Africa. There are so many that I cannot really endorse any one in particular. The only sentiment I really feel I should express on the issue is that as far as all political parties are concerned ... they should not tell me how I should play or write my music" (Rathbone and Talbot, 1987: 6-8).

Simon's response demonstrates his attempt to dismiss political pressure. He blocked out the protests, the image of the political censor, and did what he wanted to because of his privileged position, both as a wealthy musician and as an American. The option of breaking the boycott in this way was not readily available to most South African musicians.

Whatever the problems with the *Graceland* album, it further added to the chaos associated with the implementation of the cultural boycott. It allowed South African musicians like Stimela and Ladysmith Black Mambazo to receive international airplay, something not supposedly possible under the terms of the cultural boycott. Yet it was the very nature of the blanket boycott that made it necessary for South African musicians to rely on such collaborations for their exposure and economic survival.

Although Simon continually insisted that he had not broken the boycott, the UN Special Committee Against Apartheid announced that anyone buying the album was violating the embargo on South Africa (Meintjes, 1990: 65). A clear sign of the anti-apartheid lobby's ability to keep musicians in line is seen in a statement released by Stimela and Ladysmith Black Mambazo in which they apologized:

“For anything we may have said or done which may be construed as a slight, insult or disregard for the cultural boycott, the people's movement and their leaders ... After consulting with the mass democratic movement it became clear that the differences that have arisen were clearly as a result of our own interpretation and understanding of the boycott itself. We reiterate our commitment to consulting and working with democratic and progressive structures in the community and being accountable to these structures” (Anti-Apartheid News, December 1987: 15).

There is no doubt that Ray Phiri (of Stimela), Ladysmith Black Mambazo and others who participated on the *Graceland* album/or and subsequent promotional tour benefited from their involvement, but the debate concerning Simon and the South African musicians who participated in the album and/or subsequent tour emphasized the controversial nature of the total boycott strategy. This led the ANC in particular to reconsider its position.

Despite reservations from the likes of BMU and AAM who wanted to preserve the blanket boycott for reasons previously discussed, some organizations (for example the ANC, by 1987) did agree with the argument put forward by Johnny Clegg. The ANC and UDF believed that the political credentials of each South African group/performer should be taken into account when deciding whether or not they should be allowed to perform outside of the country. The interpretation of this, as well as other aspects of the boycott, was nevertheless shrouded in disagreement. For example, in 1988 Johnny Clegg and Savuka were barred by the BMU from playing at the Nelson Mandela 70th birthday tribute at Wembley despite being given the go ahead by the UDF, the internal wing of the ANC. The BMU banned Clegg because he lived and worked in South Africa (Bell, 1988:12).

Within South Africa a cultural desk was set up in 1988 to deliberate over the application of the boycott. But the desk was soon regarded as a more severe censor than the state itself. As Rob Nixon (1994:169) noted, "Ironically, it was the easing of the boycott that brought about the charge of censorship to the fore". Many musicians resented the style of the desk, believing that it was trying to promulgate culture by decree. Amampondo, for example, were boycotted in South Africa after performing at Mandela's 70th birthday concert at Wembley without the desk's clearance. Band member, Dizu Plaatjies (Interview, 1999), expressed the band's position:

That really frustrated us because you do a gig for somebody that is well respected by the world, and then at the end of the day you are boycotted by the very same people who support this man. You know, it was like 'man, what can you do?'

The UDF's cultural desk increasingly mimicked the apartheid state, as could be seen in its response to a visit made to England by Brenda Fassie in 1987. According to a newspaper report from South newspaper (cited in Press, 1990: 39-40) Fassie was only allowed to appear at a UDF-backed concert in support of striking workers if she agreed to "certain political conditions set by the UDF and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU)". This was after university students objected to her performance at the concert because she visited London "without clearance from anti-apartheid organizations". According to the report, in order to receive UDF backing, artists had to "support the principles and politics of the UDF and COSATU, and...acknowledge the struggle is led by the workers". This incident emphasizes that the UDF's approach amounted to political censorial practice, not allowing musicians freedom of expression or movement.

From the point of view of the pro-boycott lobby, the cultural boycott was effective in depriving conservative South Africans of a great white hope success story, of an apolitical or politically conservative white band becoming a top international band. The fact that musicians who potentially fitted this mould were made to feel like pariahs fed into a negative self-image which in some ways led to frustration at the apartheid system and perhaps caused some apolitical and conservative musicians to question the system. Musicians who could not perform and sell their music overseas were reduced to singing into a vacuum, their voices bouncing back at them in futility. Another positive effect of

the cultural boycott for pro-boycott supporters was the lack of exposure to live performances by top international musicians within South Africa, causing South Africans to consider the reasons for this. Also, the campaign against Sun City exposed the illegitimacy of the government's homeland system. Although the "Sun City" (1985) song did not receive airplay in South Africa, the event was covered in the press, as was each and every cancellation of a concert. This refusal of musicians to perform in South Africa was a further strength of the boycott in the sense that, as Nkosi (cited in Hanlon and Omond, 1987: 124) argued:

"Apart from their skill with song, they actually take their *bodies* there. By so doing, they lend their immense prestige and glamour to the propaganda of those who wish to create an impression of a sunny South Africa".

However, the attempt to use the cultural boycott to undermine the apartheid state's propaganda view of South Africa as a normal society was largely unsuccessful because it failed to prevent international music from being sold in South Africa. The fact that controversial political music was either banned at some level or another or was never released in South Africa in the first place, meant that music that challenged or encouraged the audience did not get through to most South Africans. Almost all that remained of overseas music was music which made South Africans feel that society was normal: the mostly entertainment-oriented music that dominates the Western popular culture industry. Supporters of apartheid were able to listen to the very same music as Americans and British fans; they could watch the music videos on television and read about the performers in international magazines. The ease with which South Africans could access this music almost completely normalized South African music consumption (so what if they could not see the musicians live in South Africa? Wealthy South Africans simply went to see them in neighbouring countries or overseas anyway). Musicians like Dire Straits claimed that their music was not available in South Africa⁷, yet this was not the case. Major labels like EMI and WEA remained in the country and most of those who were not located in South Africa organized licensing deals with

⁷ In fact at Nelson Mandela's 70th birthday gig at Wembley, Mark Knopfler, carried away by the tide of the occasion, fallaciously claimed that he was 'happy to say' that the first Dire Straits album was banned in South Africa. On the contrary, the album (and all other Dire Straits albums) was not banned, was available in shops, and was popular and sold well. Even the single and video of "Brothers in arms" (1985) were played on SABC.

companies in South Africa. Record companies that did not distribute in South Africa, like Earthworks, Rounder and Rough Trade, were exceptions. Even so, it was possible to obtain almost anything as an import. This made it even more difficult for South African musicians, who not only were prohibited from selling their music outside the country, but internally they had to compete with international releases.

Above all, the censorial effect of the cultural boycott can be seen in its approach to cultural struggle. The rationale behind the boycott was never to encourage a more direct cultural struggle on the part of foreign musicians – allowing foreign resistant music to be sold, distributed and performed in South Africa. If this led to banning at least an attempt would have been made to challenge the dominant discourse. Just as local musicians found ways to successfully voice their resistance (See Chapters Seven and Eight), so too could international anti-apartheid supporters have devised means of taking forward the cultural struggle within South Africa.

6.5 The Bureau for Information song

A further instance of the boycott strategy being used to oppose apartheid occurred in August 1986. The government decided to exploit the mid-'80s trend of releasing songs collectively performed by a multitude of musicians in aid of a humanitarian cause. This followed in the step of songs like Band Aid's "Do They Know it's Christmas" (1984) and USA for Africa's "We Are the World" (1985), aimed at raising money for and awareness of the problems of hunger in Africa. The South African government's propaganda song entitled "Together We Will Build a Brighter Future" (1986) cost 4.3 million rand to produce and involved a cross-section of 47 South African musicians promoting peace and multi-racial harmony in South Africa, despite ongoing police brutality and the erosion of freedom which came with the State of Emergency. Furthermore, the majority of South Africans did not have the right to vote, and there was extreme poverty within South Africa. Despite the supposed harmonious theme, seven versions of the 3-minute song were nevertheless recorded, in Afrikaans, English, Pedi, Sotho, Tswana, Xhosa and Zulu, for different radio and television listening and viewing slots (Byerly, 1996: 1).

Although projects like Band Aid, USA for Africa and Artists United Against Apartheid depended on the charity of the musicians who participated, the Bureau for Information

song was too controversial to attract the free services of musicians. The government offered musicians large sums of money to participate, in the region of R40 000 for leading singers. Wendy Oldfield revealed that her manager approached her, saying that he had been asked if she would participate. She was initially offered R8 000 to be part of the chorus. Then people started pulling out and she was approached to take Brenda Fassie's leading position for R42 000. This was at a time when her entire band would get less than R500 for an entire gig. Amidst pressure from politically aware friends she eventually turned down the offer after having initially accepted. Oldfield (Interview, 1998) explained how:

When I pulled out I really got a lot of flack from that side. There was a lot of pressure, like 'Stop, don't let those lefties influence you' from that side. And then I had the lefties saying 'Don't be bloody mad'. And I was kind of stuck in the middle looking for advice.

Despite similar advice from anti-apartheid activists, a number of prominent South African musicians decided to participate in the song. These included Steve Kekana, Leslie Rae Dowling, Jonathan Selby, Anton Goosen, Babsy Mlangeni, Abigail Kubeka and Blondie and Papa (Makhene). Selby (Interview, 2002), lead singer of Petit Cheval, took part in the song. He explained that:

I was approached to appear and at the time there were guys like Steve Kekana, Papa and Blondie and various other black artists that were part of this whole thing. So for me it didn't seem like anything too critical or anything too wrong in what I was doing. And frankly I just couldn't give a damn at that stage. I was a white middle class rock 'n' roller living life to the full. I didn't really fully digest the consequences of what I was doing and the real motives of the people behind it. So that is certainly one regret that I have about that ... I really wasn't tuned into what was going on in the townships. I really wasn't tuned into that kind of oppression that was going on. I was raised on Springbok Radio. I was brought up in a protected middle class Jewish environment ... My journey in life at that stage was really exploring myself, my ego, everything was a huge self-centred hedonistic journey.

Although the Bureau for Information certainly misled the musicians by telling them it was a community project for the good of South Africa, those who participated were left in no doubt as to the problems with the song, and like Selby, were primarily motivated by the money on offer. Just as Wendy Oldfield was persuaded not to take part, musicians and politicians approached other participating musicians in an attempt to prevent them from taking part. Alistair Coakley (Interview, 1998) of Hotline warned Steve Kekana not to take part:

I was doing an album with Steve Kekana at that time. He said 'What do you think I should do?' I said 'Don't touch it, you're going to be seen to be siding with the government'. And he always had these people who were hangers on, and he was always in major debt, so obviously the lure of the thirty pieces of silver got him in. And the tragic consequence was that after he did and of course all the publicity happened. He was appearing on billboards in Soweto: 'Together We Will Build a Brighter Future'.

Furthermore, Gallo sent an internal memorandum to all their artists (including Steve Kekana) advising them not to participate in the song (see Image 6.1). Gallo's memorandum provides interesting insight into the vague stand they took on the issue. The economics of participation seemed to concern them most. Whatever Gallo's rationale, the counsel was clear and sent to all their musicians. Based on this sort of advice, most top musicians refused to participate. Given the amount of money spent on the song, who was spending it and the purpose behind the song, there was immense protest from all sectors of South African society. In incidents which clearly emphasized the severity of the cultural struggle, angry protesters burnt down veteran singer Abigail Kubeke and Steve Kekana's houses. In Kekana's case a friend who was staying in his house was burnt to death. After the event Kekana admitted that his participation had been a mistake. "I hope people understand that I would never do anything to sell out any black person" (Weekly Mail, 27 March 1987). However, in retrospect Kekana (Interview, 1998) viewed the event differently:

This really depends really on how a person interprets things. I still believe today that I didn't do anything wrong. I interpreted the song as meaning that the

SUBJECT DEPARTMENT OF INFO MUSIC CONCEPT 18 August 1986
TO MESSRS FAARBURGER, SCHLOSBERG, BUGNATIC
COPIES _____
FROM MR D D S BAND

It appears that various of our artists have been contacted and asked to sign agreements with the Agency for Advertising and Marketing (Pty) Limited. These agreements cover a Department of Info project which includes musical performances, video performances, etc.

As the Gallo Group we strongly recommend that artists decline the offer and do not participate. Whilst the money being offered is extremely attractive, we do not believe participation in this venture will be anything but detrimental to artists' careers, both locally and internationally where applicable. Please do your utmost to persuade artists that participation in this venture would be contrary to their best interests, but at the end of the day do not prescribe to them or what is clearly their own decision. Should they wish to participate against our best judgment it is their decision. We will, of course, not be responsible for any detrimental consequences which flow therefrom.

D. D. S. BAND

Image 6. 1 Gallo's memo to musicians warning them not to participate in the Bureau for Information song (located in the Gallo archives).

apartheid system has now realized that it cannot go on for longer, and it has come to their senses that we should begin to work together in building this country. And that was the idea I favoured, and that is the idea that I still favour even today, and it is unfortunate that when other people interpreted it in their own way, felt that we were collaborators and unfortunately my house was petrol-bombed and my friend was killed in that.

The UDF, ANC and other political organizations and musicians clearly disagreed. Gary Rathbone (Interview, 1998) sums up the idea that those who participated had done so had betrayed the anti-apartheid movement:

We all made a stand about things like that and some people that happily accepted the cash and took part in it... said 'We didn't realize'. How come I knew? I had the same information to hand that they had. If I could make a decision, why couldn't they? And if everybody had said 'No I won't take part in that' then they wouldn't have been able to do that. They could have made a stand, but didn't.

They were just trying to take the cash. Shit, I would have loved the cash as well then but you have to have some kind of principle on this kind of thing.

Although the attempt to convince all musicians to refuse to take part in the making of the song failed, and thereby cause the government to abandon the project, the boycotts, protests, repercussions and media controversy completely undermined the song. The video of the song was shown regularly on television and played on radio, but the sale of the single failed to get off the ground with the abandonment of the project in December 1986. As with the Sun City campaign, the boycott and related protests against the Bureau song highlighted the futility of the South African government's attempts to manufacture propaganda musical events in an 'abnormal' society. Although anti-apartheid lobby groups did not have the state's committees and wherewithal to ban the song, it effectively used the boycott strategy (together with fierce protest) to undermine and eventually silence it.

Musicians were similarly successful in thwarting plans to involve top musicians in Johannesburg's centenary celebrations in 1987/88. Alistair Coakley (Interview, 1998) revealed how most musicians refused to take part because

at that stage the laws were still in force that black musicians couldn't play in so-called white areas at night.

In this case, as with the Bureau for Information song, political pressure influenced musicians to consider their involvement in particular projects. Even though the purpose was counter-hegemonic, the effect was to curtail the freedom of expression of some musicians who might otherwise have participated. The rationale behind anti-apartheid censorship, however, was that short-term sacrifice was worthwhile in the long-term, as part of a struggle for greater freedom of expression for all South Africans.

6.6. Conclusion

This chapter has shown that attempts to manipulate the use of music in society were not the sole terrain of the South African state and other groups with conservative moral and political aims. Just as the apartheid state and others tried to restrict the movement, expressions and associations of musicians within South Africa, so too did anti-apartheid organizations and musicians. Those fighting against oppression used similar strategies to those of conservative forces. The apartheid state did not allow musicians to play wherever they wanted to, nor did organizers of the cultural boycott permit musicians to play wherever they wanted to. While the former were attempting to maintain separate development and minimize radical musical influences, the latter attempted "to create among white South Africans powerful feelings of resentment at their isolation" which would hopefully "be directed at the regime itself or its hated policy of apartheid" (Nkosi in Hanlon and Omond, 1987: 124).

Various mechanisms of state and civil censorship were used in an attempt to pressure musicians into self-censorship, so that they avoided 'undesirable' musical messages, while pressure from political organizations attempted to dissuade musicians from playing allegedly conservative forms of music with apolitical or conservative lyrics. The apartheid state banned albums, intimidated and imprisoned musicians, while in opposition to the state, anti-apartheid groups blacklisted musicians, cancelled their shows, refused them permission to play where they wanted to and also intimidated and harassed them (witness the cases of Abigail Kubeka and Steve Kekana). The strategies of both sides affected the creativity of musicians, putting doubts into their minds as to what could be performed, where it could be performed, and under what conditions.

Within these similarities in strategy lies a quintessential irony. Musicians sometimes supported the very sort of processes of censorship against which they were fighting, in order to transform society more generally. Where individual musicians located themselves within this (paradoxical) situation, varied. For some musicians, it was politically necessary to fight censorship with censorship, suffering the consequences of political struggle in the process. For others, it was felt that music ought to be used more actively to fight injustice and censorship, not by removing music from struggle through boycotts/censorship but through confrontation. For yet others, it was felt that musicians

should be left alone to do whatever they wanted to, in terms of creativity and making money. Whatever the response of musicians, however, they all suffered to some extent from one form of censorship or another. A critical problem with the cultural boycott, however, was that in most cases progressive musicians suffered from censorship from both hegemonic and counter-hegemonic sources, seriously hindering their ability to make a living from their music, and in many instances, from being heard by a widespread audience.

CHAPTER SEVEN

RECORDED TEXTUAL RESISTANCE IN AN AGE OF CENSORSHIP

Can anybody hear me, hear me
Hear the song in my heart?
There's a song to be sung
That will heal those broken men.
Let us sing and we'll walk through the dark
Hand in hand
Hand in hand
("Africa! (Kukhala Abangcwele)" (1979) – Juluka)

7.1 Introduction

In Section two it was revealed that a range of pressures severely restricted the movement and creativity of musicians. In this section it will be shown that despite attempts to prevent musicians from being heard, South African musicians devised many strategies of resistance to censorship. This chapter focuses on recorded textual responses to censorship. Broader responses will be considered in Chapter Eight.

What follows is a sociological analysis of attempts by musicians to say what they wanted to through popular music with a strong emphasis on song lyrics (as discussed in Section 3.4). The importance of audience response in the process of meaning construction in musical processes is not discounted. However, resistance on the part of audiences is beyond the scope of this thesis, but is an area in need of attention elsewhere.

This chapter considers the way South African musicians negotiated the terrain of popular music by creating particular song texts. In some instances songs directly challenged the censors with overt lyrics, while in other instances lyrics and music were manipulated, camouflaged, hidden and obscured, as a range of devices were explored in an attempt to outwit censorship.

7.2 The emphasis on lyrics in censorship processes

The primary focus of acts of censorship, whether by the Directorate of Publications, the SABC or others, was the lyrics of songs. At times the music was taken into consideration as accompaniment or backing to lyrics. This was the case with Roger Lucey's "You Only Need Say Nothing" (1979) where the Directorate of Publications (1982: P82/9/115)

argued that "the words are accompanied with the beat of an African rhythm to enhance the impact of the words". It was felt that the effect was to incite people towards insurgency. At an Appeal Board hearing to contest the banning of the album, Lucey was further informed that the use of saxophones on the album was subversive! A Board spokesperson claimed that: "It is well known that this instrument incites blacks to violence" (Page, 1986: 5). However, as exhaustive research has revealed (in particular interviews with Director of Publications, Braam Coetzee [1998] and SABC record librarian, Cecile Pracher [2000]), no music was banned specifically because of the music itself. Both the Directorate and the SABC focused on lyrics and titles of songs. The only exception was the SABC's decision to ban all music by particular musicians, as with Stevie Wonder and the Beatles (see Chapter Four). Nevertheless, the SABC's ban didn't extend to banning Wonder's instrumental harmonica contribution to the Eurythmics' "There must be an angel" (1985) which was played on SABC during the Wonder ban. An SABC spokesperson explained that, "the royalties will go to the Eurythmics and not to Stevie Wonder" (Sunday Times, 1st September 1985).

When instrumentals were banned it was because of the title, as in the SABC's banning of Sabenza's "Song for Winnie" (1987), named after Winnie Mandela. There was some confusion regarding the status of the instrumental version of the unofficial (ANC) South African anthem "Nkosi Sikeleli iAfrika" which was not played on most SABC radio stations, but was occasionally played on SABC's Radio Xhosa (Rand Daily Mail, 5 February 1985).

The censors' emphasis on song lyrics means that lyrics form a crucial part of the analysis provided in this chapter. However, at times the music itself was used to convey messages. Without providing musicological analysis, some instances of music being used in this way will be considered in order to document this form of innovation.

7.3 Telling it like it is (overt lyrics)

The most brazen lyrical response to censorship was for musicians to simply say what they wanted to say in their lyrics. Those musicians who sang about controversial issues were likely to be censored, for example, songs with reference to drug use, sex, violence, and use of swear words, blasphemous language or images and slang. Musicians' insistence on

singing about these issues was a form of civil disobedience, a refusal to be silenced and a challenge to the censors. Importantly, in terms of Foucault's (1976: 95) contention that the existence of power relationships "depends on a multiplicity of points of resistance" which are scattered throughout the power network, overt resistant lyrics did not all focus simply and narrowly on the struggle to end apartheid. It was commonplace for musicians to sing about a multitude of personal and/or political themes including anti-conformist protest, anti-conscription and militarization, feminism and anti-consumerism.

Musicians such as Roger Lucey, Edi Niederlander and Mzwakhe Mbuli, confronted the state directly, prepared to openly criticize the apartheid state through their lyrics. In "You Only Need Say Nothing" (1979) Roger Lucey lamented:

There's teargas at the funeral
Of a boy gunned down by cops
They say there's too many mourners
And this is where it stops
Then they bring on the boots and the batons
And the blood runs fear and cold
And the moral of the story
Is to do what you are told

In "Bitter Fruit" (1985) Edi Niederlander protested the killing of protestors in Soweto on June 16 1976:

Wild were the bullets that burned away
From the barrel of oppression's guns
And wild grow the flowers on the unmarked graves
That hold a nation's daughters and sons

In "What's Going On (Trouble in the land of plenty)" (1987), Stimela provided insights into the contradictions of life in apartheid society:

Singin' with the brave is a crime they say
Weepin' with the wise, gets you jailed for life
The young generation has a choice, they can say no! no!
They are the tide, they are the braves, who can stop the tide
From risin' ...
In the land of plenty there's no justice
You can get a life sentence for questioning the system
Don't you know, there's no justice in the land of plenty
What's goin' on, what's goin' on?

And in "The Spear Has Fallen" (1986) Mzwakhe Mbuli was quite clear about the need for revolutionary change:

Africa the spear has fallen
Pick it up
And forward to the battle
Pick it up
Fight side by side for those freedoms
Pick it up
Fight side by side for a democratic South Africa

These lyrics reflect Mbuli's (Doxa, 1989) strong belief that musicians should not shy away from the use of explicit lyrics. He argued that:

"What has happened with people in the past is that due to things such as harassments, censorships, banning orders, detentions, people tend to change their language or their style or fail to honour appointments, appearances. Cowardice. this is what I call it. And self-censorship: I want to re-emphasize that. I've said it, and I'll say it again until I die. I'm not prepared to censor myself".

Certainly, a refusal to self-censor enabled musicians to accurately reflect their experiences and desires through songs. Confrontational lyrics were often an expression of the musician's lived reality, as explained by Tsepo Tshola of Uhuru (Interview, 1998):

We had revolutionary songs. Songs like "Africa Shall Unite" and "Freedom Fighter". We had quite a number of songs which were revolutionary songs. Although we did not look at them as revolutionary songs, it was like natural songs of that time, because when you live inside the rain, you talk about rain all the time. If you live inside too much sun you talk about the sun all the time, so it was that the atmosphere of that time was focused on political issues.

This approach completely contrasts with that of musicians who simply avoided political issues, regarding politics as a separate issue to the rest of their lives, as though people pursued politics as an interest or hobby. For these (apolitical) musicians, writing political songs was a case of 'getting political', of adopting an optional and unnecessary (political) discourse. Allan Rosenberg (Interview, 1998) of Peach, for example, spoke of how:

I didn't want to get into the black/white issue. We weren't into that type of thing. This was despite his awareness of apartheid and its injustices. Warrick Sony (Interview, 1998) found this sort of stance unacceptable, arguing that:

The inequalities here were so massive and so embarrassing and so damning, that it was obviously impossible to align one's self with what was going on or to keep quiet.

Richard Ellis (Interview, 1998) expressed a similar view, but more strongly, commenting that:

A lot of things were happening at the time. You could feel something was in the air, that we were on a brink of a change. You had to be an idiot not to find fault with it.

Indicative of the need for musicians to sing songs about their lived reality, Bright Blue saw the issue of the army as being crucial to the white maleness of the band. Band member Tom Fox (Interview, 1998) emphasized that:

There was that whole dilemma in our generation. When you got out of school you could either go to university or the army. Or you could leave the country. Those were your options. So it was a huge thing, once you were in the army you were obviously expected to do all sorts of things you don't want to do... "The Rising Tide", was dedicated to David Bruce.

Many white males deeply resented the government's policy of two years compulsory military service for all white males. Some refused to serve for moral, political and religious reasons. For most of the 1980s objectors were sent to prison for six years. This was true of David Bruce who, in 1988, was sentenced to six years in prison for refusing to serve in the SADF. This high-profile case angered many South Africans and added to the calls for an end to conscription. These anti-conscription sentiments were emotionally captured in the words of "The Rising Tide" (1988):

But you know where you stand, you have raised your hand
You're the first, you're the first of a new generation...
And always, always remember your words have been heard,
We're on your side...
Walking side by side
We're the rising tide

Dealing with the war on a more personal level, the Cherry Faced Lurchers'

"Warsong"(1986) resisted the dehumanizing, conformist machine that the army was:

Send in all the young men
To teach them to make guts and gore...

Is this what life is for?

How can they make me feel like somebody else when I'm already myself?
How can they make me act like somebody else when I can act for myself?
How can they make me think like somebody else when I can think for myself?
How can they make me dream for somebody else when I can dream for myself?

Some musicians turned their personal experiences with the police into anti-establishment songs. Richard Ellis (Interview, 1998) (of The Usuals) explained that:

I just didn't like the authorities. What they represented. That made me angry. And the arrogance that came with it. ... For me the police were the tools of a regime that I strongly detested: it didn't allow me freedom of expression as an artist, or it didn't allow my friends whether they were Indian or black or whatever colour in between, it didn't allow them the opportunity to express themselves and just be themselves. That made me intensely angry.

The Usuals' approach is reflected in "Rules and Regulations" (1982), a song about police interference during a band practice:

A policeman at the door
He swears
If we don't stop that crude noise
We won't be a band no....
We won't be a band no more

Similarly, Robbie Robb would regularly taunt the police at concerts, telling them to fuck off, insulting them and prominent politicians, just to provoke them. This stance is revealed in the Asylum Kids song "Policeman" (1981):

Policeman do you see your position?
Do you understand the position?
Policeman are you playing a role?
Are you out of control?
Mothers, don't damage your children
There's no need for policemen
The future is yours
There's no need for policemen

Edi Niederlander integrally related various themes in her music, from anti-apartheid and feminist issues to the environment and lesbian desires. In agreement with Tsepo Tshola's sentiments (above) Niederlander (Interview, 1998) felt that these real life issues simply filtered through into her songs:

It's not something where I sat down and said 'Okay I must do this now'. It's because it's integral to your daily life and part of your daily consciousness that it's inevitable that it will come out in some way if you have a certain level of creativity.

This ability to infuse song writing with her daily consciousness came through in songs like "Mabel" (1985) in which she sang about a love for a woman:

You're a good looking woman Mabel
and those jeans look good on those thighs
But give me the love I see burning there
Give me the love I see burning there
in your Mahogany eyes

This, like many of the songs considered here, was banned by the SABC. Musicians who adopted a direct approach to their lyric-writing knew that overtly political songs would not be played on radio and could even be banned outright by the government. However, it was important for many musicians to express 'subversive' ideas regardless of censorship. These sorts of songs expressed the feelings, desires and experiences of musicians in everyday situations. The manner in which they overtly stepped outside of the dominant discourse is important. In so doing, personal, cultural and political expression was found in music, and became part of a contest in which musicians sought means by which these songs could be heard by audiences.

7.4 Camouflaged textual messages

As a result of some musicians' desire to write exactly what they wanted, there exists a fairly large body of 1980s South African songs with overtly contentious lyrics. However, there were many South African musicians who attempted to negotiate censorship restrictions by manipulating, camouflaging, hiding and obscuring lyrics in an attempt to bypass or evade the censors. On a certain level avoiding overt lyrics is a form of self-censorship. Certainly, singing what you want to sing in a roundabout way rather than making outright statements (when that is what you really want to do) is self-censorship. Yet this is an approach adopted by many musicians when faced with severe censorship. They opted for forms of self-censorship rather than say nothing at all or having their music banned so that very few ever got to hear it. This is not to say that all self-

censorship was a conscious choice, but the cases referred to in this chapter were cases in which musicians did consciously attempt to bypass the censor. Musicians tried to sneak controversial ideas into recordings and/or radio using innovative methods. These attempts to outmanoeuvre the censors through subtle forms of self-censorship are regarded here as a creative attempt to open spaces of resistance.

For the songwriter attempting to create spaces of resistance resulted in a contest with the censor which, as J. M. Coetzee describes, at the least leads to a diversion from the occupation of writing and which, at worst, might even fascinate and pervert the imagination. The censor-figure is involuntarily incorporated into the interior, psychic life of the writer, "experienced as a parasite ... repudiated with visceral intensity but never wholly expelled" (Coetzee, 1996: 10). Consequently the songwriter approached the writing process with this "internalized figure of the censor" (Coetzee, 1996: 10): who put pressure on the writer (in terms of the boundaries set by the dominant hegemony) to act responsibly and police him/herself. Musician Richard Ellis (Interview, 1998), of the Usuals, summed up this experience aptly when he described how:

There was all this paranoia about a group's lyrical contents. I think it had a hand in destroying a lot of creativity, because suddenly you are self-censoring. You are writing and you see something happening, and you think 'jeez I want to write about this'. Then you start thinking 'I'm not going to get radio play'. It's self-censorship.

Another musician who acknowledged that he suffered in this way was Afrikaans singer-songwriter Anton Goosen (Interview, 1998). His first song was banned by the SABC in the late '70s; an act which he maintains affected the rest of his apartheid-era career. He described how:

It became a game for me. Not to see how far I could go without getting banned, but to almost obscurely, symbolically – on lateral levels – use words that I knew they wouldn't understand. Some I was quite surprised that they didn't understand. And maybe in a way intellectually I survived on that level by doing that.

The idea of 'playing games' with the censor is not unimportant. While this practice hints at the sort of 'perversion of the imagination' to which Coetzee alluded, it also points to potential creative spaces which can be opened by pushing back boundaries. Certainly,

specific forms of domination give rise to corresponding forms of resistance. And significantly, symbolic and camouflaged writing, a central and typical resistant response to censorship is not unfamiliar to the tradition of popular song writing and listening. Indeed, millions of popular music fans and other critical listeners have spent hours analysing and decoding song lyrics: searching for hidden or abstract meanings¹. The game of outwitting the censor thus fitted neatly into certain traditions of song writing. However, with the added burden of the ever-present imaginative figure of the censor waiting to intercept the message and prevent it from being disseminated in the first place. Under apartheid censorship the game was thus heightened: camouflaged lyrics needed to bypass the imagined censor but still be decipherable to the end listener.

7.4.1 Obscuring the text

Lyrical camouflage is regarded as an attempt to hide or obscure a word or phrase as it appears in a song or as it was originally intended to appear. Approaches to lyrical camouflage varied between musicians: In the least tactful approach musicians would record songs as they wanted to, but then change potentially offensive words on the lyric sheet. Knowing the SABC censors' preoccupation with lyric sheets, some musicians thought this a potentially useful route to bypass the censors. Rob McLennan (Interview, 1998) of No Friends of Harry noted how they would:

Change it on the lyric sheet and not tell them what we were actually saying. It was very subtle. The music stayed the same. We had to fax through to the SABC the lyric sheet so that they could see that there was nothing controversial or inflammatory or that sort of shit.

Keith Berelowitz (Interview, 1998) of Carte Blanche recalled how:

There were certain words you couldn't use in those days. You couldn't use the word black or white or policeman. And you had to submit your words to the SABC I remember, and I used to change them.

¹ One only needs listen to or read a fundamentalist Christian account of the 'Evils of rock music' or similar topic to witness a fascinating exploration of the hidden messages of rock songs, particularly to do with songs that – despite their seeming innocence - are interpreted as being about Satanism, drug-taking, sex and other contemporary evils.

Indeed Carte Blanche submitted counterfeit lyric sheets to the SABC for the song "Killer in the Crowd" (1986). They bizarrely changed the line "I'm just a policeman, a martyr in blue" to "I'm just a please man, a tomato in blue". In a further example, the recorded version of David Kramer's "Tjoepstil" (1981) on his *Bakgat* (1981) album includes the line "But when the shit starts to fly", yet on the lyric sheet the line is changed to "But when things turn sour". In a more tightly crafted instance, Shifty Records released a compilation album of rebel rhythms called *A Naartjie in our Sosatie* (1985) which was Afrikaans for 'a tangerine in our kebab', but sounded like 'Anarchy in our society'. In this way the use of an obviously subversive title (which would surely have been banned) was avoided. The title worked exceptionally well in diverting the suspicions of the censors, given that naartjies and sosaties are both an inherent part of Afrikaner culture: naartjies are a fruit often associated with rugby matches, the national Afrikaans sport, while sosaties are an essential component of a good South African braaivleis (barbecue). At face value the title of the album therefore conjured well-intended and jovial images of important aspects of Afrikaans pastimes. Indeed, when the SAP submitted the album to the Directorate it was not banned, and no mention at all was made of the album title in the explanation of the Directorate's decision (Directorate of Publications, 1985: P85/10/77). A similar play on wording was used by Chicco (Sello Twala) on his single "We miss you Manelow" (1987), a slightly disguised reference to Nelson Mandela which was understood by many listeners. As Jabu Khanyile (Interview, 2001) noted:

He said 'Manelow' instead of Mandela. But we understood that he wanted to talk about Mandela.

The Kalahari Surfers made good use of existing songs to voice their protest by providing subtle renditions in order to change the political context of songs. These new versions were not just covers, although the tunes and words remained the same. An excellent example was their version of Nancy Sinatra's "These Boots Were Made for Walking" (1966). Sinister, menacing vocals completely transformed the meaning of the line "They're gonna walk all over you". The song was re-titled "Song for Magnus" (1985), after Magnus Malan, Minister of Defence. The Surfers similarly covered Creedence Clearwater Revival's "I See a Bad Moon Rising" (1969), re-titled "The Voice of Rage and Ruin" (1985), and The Who's "Won't Be Fooled Again" (1971), re-titled

"Don't Get Fooled Again" (1989). Warrick Sony (Interview, 1998), who was strongly influenced by Robert Wyatt's ability to inject new emotion and sentiment into cover versions, did covers of songs he wished had been written for the South African context in the first instance. This approach is similar to, although to different (also protest) ends, the hip hop practice of digitally sampling old songs and redeploying them in the present. The central challenge of hip hop though is to call into question "Western notions of cultural production as property through its evocation, quotation, and outright theft of socially shared musical memories" (Lipsitz, 1994: 37). It is the borrowing from socially shared memories which made the Kalahari Surfers covers so effective: the menacing vocals caused the listener to focus on the lyrics, not to take them for granted, to suddenly realize that they said something about the South African situation. In a way, they had been claimed for the South African context in a similar fashion to the way in which hip hop artists claimed samples from old songs for themselves and their communities. The use of covers in this way was not common in a country that thrived off cover versions of Western rock/pop songs. Very few bands used reinterpreted covers as a means of conveying protest, although on the folk circuit straightforward imitative covers of overseas protest songs were common.

7.4.2 Symbolic and cryptic lyrics

Many musicians tried to sneak controversial ideas onto recordings and/or radio using cryptic references to the South African situation. One group who used this approach was the Soul Brothers, writing lyrics in the vernacular. Band member, Moses Ngwenya (Interview, 1998) explained that:

We had some tracks with lyrics which talked about the situation at that time, you know like people were suffering, and our fathers are in jail, the children are crying, they don't have food and they don't have a place to sleep, you know. But we knew at that time they were censoring records, so you wouldn't just put it as straight as it is. There's a way that you can maybe change one or two words, but the meaning, it means the same thing.... we were very aware of [censorship].

That's why we had to change some of the lyrics, you know. Even if they mean

something else, but we changed them to sound like it doesn't mean it, but when an African person listens to it, he will know exactly what we're trying to say.

Bayete also approached song writing in this way. The band's songwriter and lead vocalist, Jabu Khanyile (Interview, 2001) explained:

In those days live we were too political. So when we went into the studio I said to them, 'No, I'll just hide the song messages. People who censor the music must not understand it. That's why we sing it in Zulu. So I used the wording 'township style'. I used the wording that people understand is political but you [non-Zulu speakers] cannot understand it.

Juluka regularly encrypted their lyrics in this manner. For example, on their first album – *Universal Men* (1979) – they included the Zulu song (with Zulu lyrics) "Inkunzi Ayihlabi Ngokumisa" (1979), about two fighting bulls. The one bull is large with strong horns while the other is small with tiny horns. But when they fight the little one wins because of superior fighting knowledge. The battle against apartheid was thus encrypted through the use of a Zulu proverb (Marre and Charlton, 1985: 39). Stimela regularly made similar use of symbolic lyrics, for example in the song "Rubbing Sand in My Eyes" (1987). Ray Phiri (Interview, 2001), the group's vocalist and main songwriter, explained:

The song "Rubbing Sand in My Eyes" was based on the tears we got: we were performing in Pietermaritzburg in 1983 when they tear-gassed us like crazy to disperse the audience ... I had to leave it "Rubbing sand in my eyes" because if you have sand in you eyes it's really painful. So as time went on I could just use things like that 'tsotsi taal' [township slang], we'd disguise some of those songs.

In the song "Hekke Van Paradise" (1982, Gates of Paradise) David Kramer described a town in symbolic terms, as being:

Like a clean white shirt
With gold cuff links
It looks quite clean
But the armpits stink...

Here Kramer used the white shirt with smelly armpits as a metaphor for the racially segregated town, a clever means of making a critical statement about apartheid segregation in an obtuse manner, leaving it up to audiences to read the metaphor critically.

Despite Joseph Shabalala's admission that he did not write controversial songs (as revealed in Chapter Four), he later claimed to have written symbolic songs about the South African political situation. In particular Shabalala referred to Ladysmith Black Mambazo's "Nomathemba" (1973) about a girl who Shabalala described as a symbol of hope. He said that when he created the song:

"In my mind it was just like I'm talking about South Africa. 'Nomathemba': hope. Hey guys, you must have hope to do things – confidence. But I talk about that beautiful girl. I was in love with her and she ran away from me. Now I'm calling that girl. Come back, come back, come back Nomathemba. On my way home, here's Nomathemba sitting under a willow tree, like an orphan. It's a poetry to help people to come together" (Shabalala, quoted in Ballantine, 2000: 245).

A similar example of indistinct symbolism in a much played song on SABC is found in Steve Kekana's song "The Bushman" (1982) about a hunter-gatherer who taught himself to shoot with a bow and arrow:

He lives under a tree
Hides himself and sleeps
His mind is tuned to be aware of danger
He never makes mistakes
Survival is his way
At nights he plays a song on a wooden kalimba
Wo ho the bushman
He fights like a man should do
He strives like a man should do...

These sentiments complied with apartheid notions of blacks as primitives and the song was played on SABC. However, Kekana (Interview, 1998) explained that:

In my mind I didn't really think of a real Bushman, I was thinking of the guerrillas.

Kekana's lyrics (as well as those of Shabalala in the previous example) were therefore open to radical interpretation. But as can be seen, the symbolism tended to be very vague in order to receive airplay on SABC, given the SABC's paranoia about anything controversial being played on air. For example, Margaret Singana's fairly innocuous "Light Up the Light" was banned because the SABC censors feared it might be interpreted as being about revolution.

7.4.3. Infusing resistant musical meaning

Not all symbolic attempts at outmanoeuvring the SABC censors were vague. Probably the most successful attempt at using symbolism to hide a resistant message was achieved by Bright Blue who successfully bypassed the SABC's strict controls with their song "Weeping" (1987) which contained symbolic lyrics about a man living in fear within a heavily repressive society:

I knew a man who lived in fear
It was huge, it was angry, it was drawing near
Behind his house, a secret place
Was the shadow of the demon he could never face

He built a wall of steel and flame
And men with guns, to keep it tame
Then, standing back, he made it plain
That the nightmare would never ever rise again
But the fear and the fire and the guns remain

The lyrics were sung against the backdrop of a haunting version of "Nkosi Sikeleli" – the ANC national anthem that was avoided by most SABC stations. Nevertheless, the song became a major hit on SABC's Radio 5 music station. The disguised tune, if detected, heightened the symbolism of the lyrics, guiding the audience into a preferred reading.

Strains of freedom songs were often used as tunes for songs or performed as instrumentals (especially by jazz musicians). Kerkhof (1989: 12) discusses how

"(Abdullah) Ibrahim has for many years now utilised the melodies of various freedom songs in his piano improvisations.... In this way instrumental music, charged with the melodies of freedom songs, gains a level of political meaning for the South African audiences who hear the unstated lyrics in their hearts".

Certainly, Christine Lucia (2002: 127) argues that: "By referencing the past in musical ways ... Ibrahim generated a space – for himself and, more importantly, for his listeners – in which anything, including a utopian future, could be imagined". The African Youth Band, featuring Blondie Makhene, pursued a similar route, releasing an album of instrumental versions of struggle songs in 1989. The tunes were traditional tunes in the first place, which had been given new lyrics within a struggle context. The released album thus invoked either one of two sets of lyrics, adding to the encoded textual meaning of the songs on the album. In these instances the musician relies on a degree of

cultural capital amongst listeners, who need to know the melodies in the liberation context in order to read the resistant meaning of the songs in their present form.

Kerkhof (1989: 12) argues that this sort of innovation gives lie to the myth that it is impossible to produce revolutionary art under the circumstances of oppression and censorship. On the contrary, such initiatives emphasize the inventiveness of some musicians in giving spirit to the oppressed. For Ibrahim, music is a strong force and integral part of community life. As such it is able to express the experiences, longings and desires of the people. In African society it fulfils a social, devotional and healing role as well as being a means to recording history. Ibrahim (in Topouzis, 1988: 67) explained that: "Music is my personal contribution to the struggle against apartheid and toward the institution of a just society". On some pieces Ibrahim wrote lyrics to accompany his music, making his meaning clear, as is revealed in an excerpt from a version of "Anthem for a New Nation" (1977), including the lines:

Fight for liberation
Be the new nation
Join the revolution
Now

Although he used lyrics in this particular example, Ibrahim mostly recorded and performed instrumental pieces. He was one of many jazz musicians who gave political titles to instrumentals, such as his "Liberation Dance" (1979), the instrumental version of "Anthem for the New Nation" (1979), and "Mandela" (1986). Likewise Basil Coetzee entitled one of his pieces "Song for Winnie" (1987) and Amampondo performed a percussion version of a piece called "Umzimo Lumtwala" (This burden is heavy). In a similar vein, Abdullah Ibrahim used cryptic references on his (mostly instrumental) *Underground in Africa* (1974) album, recorded in Cape Town. The title referred to the underground armed struggle and the record label was listed as 'Mandla', a variation of the word 'Amandla', meaning 'power' and used in a call and response manner at political rallies (Rasmussen, 2002: 63). These titles made the album less controversial, while providing specific clues for radical interpretation by politically aware listeners. Similarly, some bands gave themselves names which made their stance absolutely clear, thus providing the audience with a clue as to how to read their music. Such groups included

Illegal Gathering, Joe Azania and the Chameleons, Oliver and the Tambourines (named after then ANC President, Oliver Tambo), Gramsci Beat and Amandla.

7.4.4 Obscuring resistant tracks and messages

Some of the strategies already discussed effectively distracted the gaze of the censors from controversial messages, for example the naming of the *A Naartjie in our Sosatie* (1985) compilation album. However, other methods were used which deserve mention in their own right, and which do not easily fall within the categories previously discussed. In particular, it was fairly common for musicians to include controversial tracks on albums with no intention of releasing them as singles. In this way the songs in question would not fall prey to the scrutiny of the SABC censors, but would remain unscathed on albums on sale in retail outlets, available for the public to discover in their own contexts, but not on radio. Uncontroversial single releases played on radio acted as a means of promoting the album and in this way the SABC unwittingly promoted the more controversial album tracks. This is not to suggest that musicians consciously wrote commercial songs as a strategic exercise to get 'subversive' messages out into the public, but rather that some musicians avoided compromise on certain songs by not promoting them heavily in ways which would needlessly attract the negative attention of the censors. They were content with the fact that the uncensored song would be heard by some who got to hear the album. Benjy Mudie (Interview, 1998) recalled a decision taken along these lines involving the Asylum Kids:

I recall the Asylum Kids, sitting with Robbie, Dino and Steve, talking about the *Solid Principle* album (which is a brilliant record), and discussing it and saying, 'Look, you realize you're not going to get airplay on that track – "Shore's end"'. And he [Robbie] said, 'Yeah'. And I said, 'Do you want to edit or do you want to go with it?' And he said, 'I want to go as is'.

Other effective examples of similar streamlining of less controversial tracks as singles, while leaving more resistant songs uncensored on albums included Juluka's *Work For All* (1983) album and Jennifer Ferguson's *Hand Around the Heart* (1986) album. In the former instance, Juluka released "December African Rain" (1983) and "Work For All" (1983) as singles while not drawing undue attention to "Mdantsane" (1983), a song about

the Mdantsane bus boycott with lyrics that drew overt attention to the contradictions of apartheid South Africa. Similarly, in the latter instance, Jennifer Ferguson released the song about a personal relationship, "Angel Fish" (1986) as a single while not drawing attention to numerous anti-apartheid album tracks such as "Cake Song" (1986), "Suburban Hum" (1986) and "Ashley's Song" (1986).

7.4.5 Evaluating camouflaged textual resistance

Although there were times when the use of subtexts created ingenious strategies of bypassing censorship, symbolism was often weak and ineffectual. For Afrikaans protest singer Ralf Rabie (Interview, 1998) the vague symbolism of musicians like Anton Goosen was unsuccessful. As he commented:

If you ask me where the protest is in Anton Goosen's music, I am afraid I won't be able to tell you. I couldn't see it at the time. I still can't.

Roger Lucey (Interview, 1998) was also sceptical of vague symbolic lyrics. He argued:

What's the point of having an anti-fascist message with lyrics like 'I'll take the high road and you take the low road and we'll go and smell the daisies'? This is bullshit. It meant nothing. I didn't believe in that approach. I believed in an in your face, tell it like it is approach. The cops are out there, they're fucking throwing people out of windows, and that is what it's all about, and that's what the song says. Simple.

In Lucey's own experience, the compromises made on his first album (discussed in Chapter Five), to which he resentfully consented, angered him because despite the self-censorship, the album was banned. In other words, a degree of self-censorship seemed acceptable if it meant the broader song or album could get through to the listener. This approach was summed up by Gary Hertselman (Interview, 1998) who noted that for the Kêrels:

In the recording, when the albums were made, maybe a word was switched here or there, so that more people could hear it and that because the word essentially wasn't what it was about. It was about changing these people's minds so if you popped the word out and put another word in you could perhaps get on the radio and work on the people's minds that way.

Despite the softening effect of self-censorship, the overall message was nevertheless often subject to external censorship. As previously indicated, this is what happened with Roger Lucey's *The Road is Much Longer* (1979) album. Lucey (Personal correspondence, 2000) expressed his exasperation:

I thought we should have put the damn thing out and bugger the rest. I suppose there was a good chance of Dave (Marks) getting into shit but I felt that we blinked during the stand-off with the beast and being the cocky little bastard that I was, I felt like a coward.

Similarly Richard Ellis (Interview, 1998), also stung by unsuccessful acts of self-censorship, expressed an opinion which is true for many of the musicians who recorded music with controversial lyrics:

You might as well have written whatever you want to write anyway because you weren't going to get radio play anyway.

The only successful way of avoiding the sort of failure outlined by Lucey and Ellis, was found in those attempts, like Bright Blue's "Weeping" (1987), which managed to camouflage the message in a clever way, yet maintaining the clarity of the message.

7.5 Satirical and ironical messages

An offshoot of the camouflaged or symbolic song is the satirical or ironic song. Satire typically aims to make people laugh but the laughter masks its central function, which is to deride, expose, ridicule, and denounce abuse, folly and vice within society (Ebewo, 1997: 31). The laughter signifies triumph over the object of scorn (Knox, 1951: 1). Satire is thus a clever medium of protest and potentially successful means of bypassing censorship, given that the essence of the song is not immediately apparent.

Musicians adopting a satirical approach tend to make use of the lyrics to say what they want to, but the music itself can also be used to satirize cultural characteristics associated with particular forms of music. For example, musicians have used the country music form for satirical songs about the conservative Deep South in the USA, as was done by the Kalahari Surfers in "Bigger Than Jesus" (1989) and Randy Newman in "Big Hat, No Cattle" (1999). In this way the satirical song becomes a parody, producing an imitation which mocks the original (Jameson, 1983: 113). The satire expresses contempt for the

culture under attack, insisting on its banality. Satirical music thus has the capacity to form part of an oppositional culture and, by means of ridicule, symbolically relegate aspects of the dominant culture to the margins.

In the 1980s, the greatest proponent of the satirical tradition was David Kramer. He created a satirical persona based on aspects of South African culture (in terms of dress, hairstyle and his Boland accent). For Kramer (Personal correspondence, 2001), satire and wit were powerful weapons in the social political battle against folly and stupidity. For Kramer, a satirical approach to writing was far more interesting than writing straightforward protest songs. He felt that were he to write serious political songs his music “would become like newspaper editorials, the same story over and over again” (Andersson, 1981: 151). Instead Kramer balanced humour and solemnity in exploring the value system of his characters: their taste, their dress, the way they decorate their homes, and the way they live (Andersson, 1981: 151). Often the point of sadness in his characters’ lives would be the point of humour too. For example, in the song “I had a dream” (1981), a white man dreams¹ that he has been reclassified ‘coloured’, but is relieved when he wakes up to find he is white, but then his dog begins to growl at him. In the pathos lies the critique of the society which produces such beliefs or the ignorance that goes with them.

Strangely Kramer did not use the double meaning within satire to bypass the censors. The songs on his debut album *Bakgat* (1981) were full of references deemed too offensive and blasphemous by the SABC, who consequently banned the album outright (Personal correspondence with Kramer, 2001; SABC archives). Kramer’s next album, *The Story of Blokkies Joubert* (1981), was far less controversial, about an old retired South African rugby player. The singles “Hak Hom Blokkies” (1981) and “Royal Hotel” (1981) were lightly satirical songs about the men who hung out at a small town bar. Both songs featured the ‘two-step’ vastrap rhythmic accompaniment style strongly punctuated by a prominent concertina sound typical of traditional boeremusiek, a very popular style of music amongst white Afrikaners. At this time Kramer developed a concept introduced in the lyrics of “The Royal Hotel” (1981) in which the character is referred to as ‘almal se pêl’ (everybody’s friend). Kramer increasingly marketed himself as ‘everybody’s friend’ as a sales promotion technique, based on the combined likeable and humorous

characteristics of a white and coloured working class male. Also, his increasing commercial success led to his participation in a series of Volkswagen minibus television advertisements in which he played this character, which reinforced the 'everybody's friend' image. Although Kramer still continued to perform and record satirical pieces, the new image heralded a hugely successful phase in his career, on the back of massive support from the traditionally white conservative Afrikaans community². For most of this audience, the element of satire in Kramer's music was lost. They found him funny and extremely likeable, bought his subsequent albums and attended his concerts in droves. The general media hype surrounding Kramer's success pushed his non-critical image to the extent that anyone hearing his music on the radio or reading about him in the press had little inkling of Kramer's critical edge. Prominent alternative Afrikaans musician Koos Kombuis (Interview, 1998) recalled how, at that time, he felt that:

David Kramer was probably underrated by my friends and myself. They never understood that he also made political statements. All the way, no one heard it. Like "So Long Skipskop" [1986] and songs like that. Everyone just thought that he was 'almal se pêl'.

The fact that the majority of the audience viewed him as the white Afrikaner everyman presented a problem for Kramer, who felt the pressure of the conservative expectations of the audience. As he explained (Interview, 1998):

I got to a point where I felt quite trapped by my popularity, and by the expectations of what people thought I was going to do and the potential for writing, moving more and more into the ra-ra-ra type of South African song. And I suppose at that point I was becoming quite disillusioned with people misinterpreting what I really was trying to do, and that there wasn't really a lot of emphasis on issues of language and cultural politics and so on, and also I got involved with the Volkswagen commercials and I suppose people started seeing me much more as just a comedian. You know, a funny little guy ...and I became more and more one-dimensional. I felt people weren't really listening. And I suppose the edge that I had in the early years – which was very powerful for me –

² It should be noted, however, that Kramer's music was also immensely popular amongst the (Afrikaans-speaking) Cape Coloured community, particularly in the Western Cape.

I'd lost that. And was now very much accepted by everybody. So, sort of by the mid-'80s a sense of disillusion had set in ... It was the time of the State of Emergency and the country was really in a bad, bad way—and suddenly I looked at myself and I didn't like what I saw. This happy-go-lucky guy making everybody feel good, and I decided to try and get back to where I had started. And that's what led me back to doing *Baboondogs*.

Baboondogs (1986) was a far more serious album than any that preceded it, in which Kramer tackled political issues more directly. For example, in "Shake My Head" (1986) he sang:

The woman next door has been detained
For no official reason
I'm so ashamed I shake my head

The album was less popular, as his strong (conservative) white Afrikaans support base avoided the album, disillusioned with their folk hero. This disillusionment with Kramer's political stance is illustrated by a cartoon in a national Afrikaans newspaper which portrayed Kramer being kicked out of the Royal Hotel with the caption: "Where's that Volkswagen) bus now that I need it most?" (Beeld, 14 January 1986, Image 7.1). The cartoon itself was a response to a petition which Kramer signed, at the request of Johnny Clegg, demanding the withdrawal of South African troops from the townships. Another cartoon appeared after a number of David Kramer's songs (from his critical *District Six* musical, also released in 1986) were banned on SABC for political reasons. The cartoon depicted locals at the Royal Hotel watching David Kramer approach wearing his trademark red shoes and playing his guitar. One says to the other "Just as I thought, Frikkie, with those red vellies he's a blerrie communist from the feet down" (Cape Times, 10 December 1986, Image 7.2).

Yet perhaps this is the strength of satire — the confusion within the laughter, as the audience responds to the subject matter. Kramer (Personal correspondence, 2001) notes that the laughter depends on each member of the audience's individual response. For him, a satirist:

Stands in front of the audience and holds up a mirror in which the audience sees a distorted image of themselves. In the audience are those who laugh at the image



Image 7. 1 Where's that bus now that I need it most? (Beeld, 14 January, 1986)

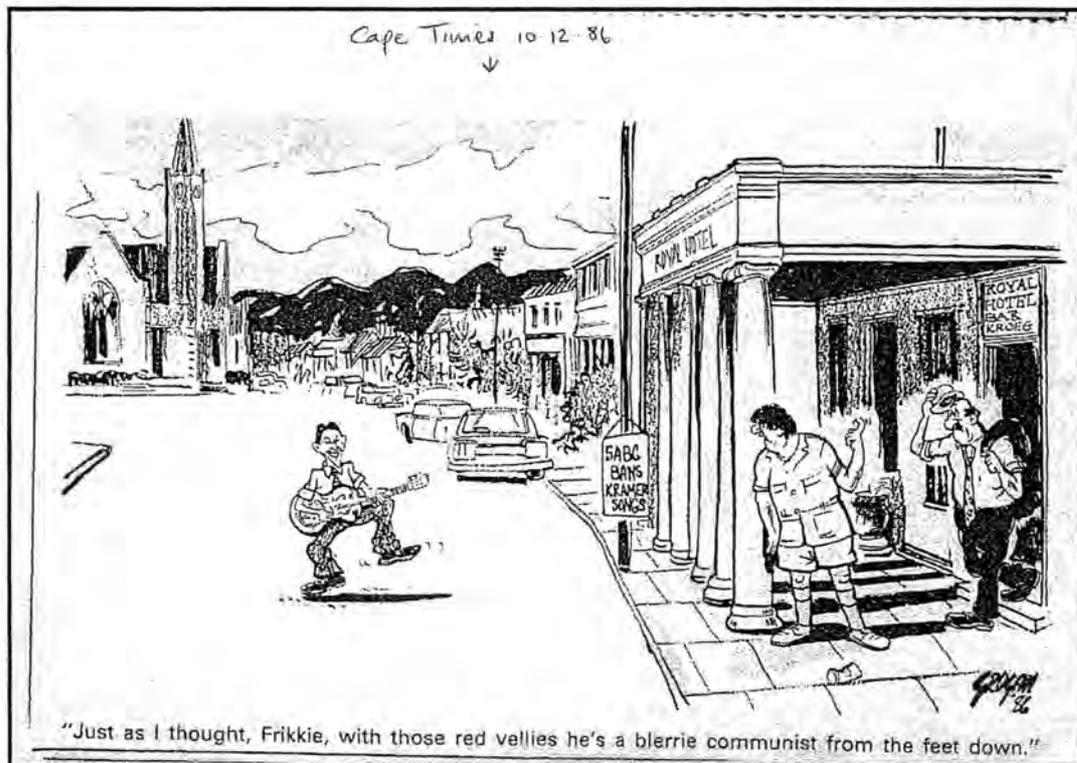


Image 7. 2 Reaction to Kramer's political songs (Cape Times, 10 December 1986).

of themselves thinking they are laughing at the self-mockery of the satirist. There are those that recognise themselves in the distorted image and they laugh out of the shock of recognising a truth about themselves. Or they are uncomfortable with what they see and don't laugh at all. And then there are those who believe that it is not a reflection of themselves, but the person in front of them and it is they that laugh behind that person's back. The satirist laughs behind his mask.

Kramer used laughter both as a weapon and as a critical device to cause people to question the values of the society around them. However, laughter can only achieve these goals if it is experienced as embarrassing or awkward in a way which ridicules the object of the laughter or the person doing the laughing.

Another South African singer to make use of the satirical approach, often in a more hard-hitting manner, was James Phillips, who, in his first band (Corporal Punishment) was ably supported by fellow band member Carl Raubenheimer, with his equally poignant song writing talents. According to Raubenheimer (Interview, 1998), the point of their songs was:

to shock white complacency. It was a very complacent society. Everybody was meant to go to the army, they went to the army, and the army made men out of them. They didn't realize that they made robots out of them ... I think that we just wanted to tell people that the army was a pile of shit and white society was a pile of shit. But at the same time we weren't being lefty about it, we were kind of being naive about it.

Echoing David Kramer's approach to satire, Phillips stressed that "it's so easy to be political all the time that after a while it starts being bullshit ... If you're just singing political songs all the time people take no notice of you anymore" (Johnson, 1981). A good example of Phillips' use of satire was "Brain Damage" (1980), about Arrie Paulus, general secretary of the right-wing white Mine Workers Union, who said that blacks were baboons. The song depicted his racism:

He's a supervisor, it takes a lot of skill
To be in charge of 40 kaffirs — that's responsible
He doesn't mind that he gets all the pay
Arrie Paulus says they're just baboons anyway

Similarly in the song "Darkie"(1979) they challenged stereotypical white racist thinking and white fear of black South Africans:

Darkie's gonna get you
In the night with a knife

As such, Raubenheimer (Interview, 1998) felt that Corporal Punishment:

Weren't singing like 'Freedom'—we weren't doing that kind of stuff, we were rather expressing a prevalent view in a sardonic way. We were saying: 'This is the kind of thing that people are saying, look how ridiculous it is. You can't say this sort of thing. It's insane!'

Yet some members of the audience were disconcerted by the apparent racism of Corporal Punishment's lyrics, not realizing the satire (Andersson, 1981: 141).

After Corporal Punishment broke up, Phillips constructed a satirical character by the name of Bernoldus Niemand, choosing the name simply because: "I've always been fascinated by the name Niemand. Mister Nobody. It's a great name!"(Doxa, 1989). On an album entitled *Wie is Bernoldus Niemand?* (1984), Phillips recorded a number of satirical songs. Two in particular – "Hou My Vas Korporal" (Hold me tight, corporal) and "Snor City" (Moustache City) – dealt with the complacency of white males in accepting conscription into the army, where one had to simply obey orders without questioning them. The former song makes use of a traditional boeremusiek vastrap (quickstep) style backing but is nevertheless highly critical of the army, including lyrics like:

It's my duty and not my choice
It's not my fault but I don't speak out
Here I sit and die and die³

"Snor City" (1984) is about Pretoria and its countless moustache-faced men. The song parodies the disco fusion style in satirizing the Afrikaner macho stereotype which the moustache represents (Smit, 1992: 38). For Phillips, moustaches were closely entwined with army mentality. He commented that:

"It's always bugged me, this moustache thing ... I went and sat on a pavement in Pretoria for five hours and I just checked these snors (moustaches). And just wrote the lines and then just put it to that groove – 'The further I walk the more my hope diminishes'— because everybody's got one, a moustache. Because they

³ Translated from Afrikaans.

all go to the army and the only hair you can grow in the army is a moustache. So of course everybody grows a moustache because that means that now they're better than all the other new ous (blokes) and then they just never shave it off.

And it's just there forever. They don't even know that it's there" (Doxa, 1989).

Phillips was very pessimistic about the impact of his music on the dominant discourse. When a journalist asked him if he felt that he was hitting at the establishment with his lyrics he replied: "I don't know. Maybe. "Hou My Vas Korporaal" maybe. But nobody will hear it, so the establishment will never hear it, so it can never hit them". Neither Corporal Punishment nor Bernoldus Niemand was played on SABC. The songs that were submitted to SABC were banned from airplay, and Phillips only ever enjoyed a marginal audience. So even though he never became as popular as David Kramer, he nevertheless experienced similar problems in getting his message across. And like Kramer, Phillips did not write sufficiently subtle lyrics to bypass the overly sensitive SABC censors.

The example of Corporal Punishment's "Brain Damage" (1980) emphasizes how satirists work at their best when their material is derived from the society around them. Warrick Sony (Interview, 1998) makes this point when discussing his use of satire in some of his Kalahari Surfers material.

I found so much stuff that was being broadcast so ridiculous and just laced with all sorts of entendres and comedy, bizarre comedy.

For example, he wrote a farcical critique of a song called "Let's Go Shopping" (1985) by commercial disco black band Supafrika. Virtually the only lyric in the song was 'Let's go shopping'. Sony found it so absurd that a black South African band could be doing such a superficial song in the 1980s, that he wrote a satirical response to the song, "Beachbomb" (1989) about the Magoos bomb⁴ with the chorus line:

Let's go shopping
when the bombs stop dropping
from bags and drains

A song called "The Surfer" (1984) was a form of audio documentary in which Sony recorded an extremely racist, sexist, and violent surfer/lifesaver boasting about his conquests on the Durban beachfront. Sony cut out the most extreme parts of the interview and put these to a musical backing. Unlike the Corporal Punishment's "Brain Damage"

⁴ Reference to a bomb blast (planted by the ANC) at the Magoos Bar in Durban in the 1980s.

(1980) where the band quoted Paulus, here Sony simply let the surfer speak for himself, but the juxtaposition of all his extreme statements to a musical backing produced a piece of satiric irony criticizing the very things the surfer boasts of. The piece was interpreted differently by various people: when the surfer later heard the song he loved it for its face-value lyrics, the management at the EMI pressing plant refused to press the album because they regarded it as pornographic, while many sensitive people thought it was offensive. As with James Phillips, Sony's music was only ever supported by a marginal audience. It is thus difficult to determine the extent to which his audience understood what he was attempting to do, although he and Phillips both enjoyed educated, cult audiences who tended to support them for their political stance and cultural critiques as much as for their music.

7.5.1. Evaluating satire and irony in music

The tendency for audiences not to recognize satire in music has plagued many musicians, certainly those covered in this chapter. This is particularly true of ironic satire where the irony entails speaking in the language of the subject and seeming to identify with that subject (Coetzee, 1996: 221). The singer is forced into the paradox of being and not being the subject of the song. Frith (1996a: 198-199) notes that in any type of song the singer's act is complex: in a single song the singer might present the character presented as the protagonist in the song, in the role of the singer as narrator, but also other characters who the song might be about or refer to. In addition there is the singer him/herself as a person, physically singing with his/her own voice. This leads to audience difficulty in disentangling vocal realism from vocal irony.

For many in the audience the boundary between whom the singer is and the subjects of his/her irony become blurred. This was true of Kramer especially given that, in addition to the general "everyone's friend" persona, he did not restrict himself to a single one-dimensional satirical voice. As Kramer (Personal correspondence, 2001) explained:

I adopt a voice. Not always the same voice, but the voice of the protagonist. In order to write I adopt a point of view. In my imagination I become the character that is singing the song. I hear the voice of the character; I see the world through the character's eyes. I empathise with the character. It is a process of exploration

and imagined experience and there is a paradox in that I am me and the character ... In retrospect I see that one becomes entrapped by the popularity of (one's) own inventions. As I say there are a variety of images of 'myself' that I offer for the purpose of the song. Some of these are more popular than others. And if the intention of my work is not understood then the confusion that arises could be seen as a problem.

Although Kramer enjoyed and believed in what he was doing, this misunderstanding on the audience's part at a particularly serious time in South African history, led him to seriously reconsider his approach to music – and the use of satire – at that time. The multiplicity of voices present in any satirical song does indeed make it a difficult song format to interpret, with layers of interpretation required. Kramer (Personal correspondence, 2001) pointed out that:

When you perform to 600 people the audience perceives the show in 600 different ways. Each one responds to the work uniquely and yet collectively. The audience responds as an audience, but the impact and the perception of the work is unique in each individual.

Kramer's point emphasizes Frith's (1996a: 11) claim that lyrical analysis needs to consider words in performance, in the relationship between singer and listener (see Chapter Three for a more detailed consideration of Frith's argument). The different elements involved in a song combine to produce a total meaning that cannot be discovered through a surface reading of the lyrics.

An important means of conveying the satirical message to the audience is through the voice itself. Kramer tended to use accents which portrayed the subject's character. As Corporal Punishment's lead singer, Phillips sang with a more personal, directed, angry voice. A song like "Darkie" (1979) has a sense of urgency about it lacking in Kramer's songs. As Bernoldus Niemand, Phillips donned a caricature voice in many of the songs. Here, as in Kramer's songs, the voice (ostensibly through the accent) becomes what Frith (1996a: 198) refers to as a "vocal costume." The accent, when used, is one mechanism the singer can use to insert quotation marks around the lyrics s/he is singing. This can allow the audience to understand the surface meaning of the lyrics as not that of the singer. In the case of David Kramer, it was only when he released *Baboondogs* (1986)

and used his own accent on some of the songs that many people realized that the voice he used in his earlier music was a construct. Also, his political sentiments were made more overt. As a result, some were able to retrospectively insert those quotation marks.

There is clearly a contextual framework needed to make sense of satirical songs. Without a common understanding between musician and audience it is not only the censors who are bypassed, but the audience too! This brings into play Bourdieu's (1990: 131) habitus, "at once a system of models for the production of practices and a system of models for the perception and appreciation of practices". Accordingly, practices and representations are available for classification, "but they are immediately perceived as such only in the case of agents who possess the code, the classificatory models necessary to understand their social meaning". The censors often lacked the classificatory models necessary to understand the preferred subversive reading of the musician, focusing instead on an immediately obvious reading of the lyrics. They often censored satirical songs for overt reasons such as blasphemy, the use of slang and swear words and overtly negative messages, as in the case of Phillips' "Hou My Vas Korporaal" (1984). For this reason, satire could have been an effective means of bypassing censors even if the majority of the audience did not understand the message. However the main satirists in South Africa did not appear to make a concerted effort to use the format for this purpose. In the instances referred to, satire was used as a humorous attack on negative aspects of South African society. It was a style of song writing chosen for artistic reasons, because the form appealed to the songwriter, not necessarily to bypass the censors. Had this been the case, the likes of Kramer and Phillips would have avoided overtly controversial content within their satirical pieces.

Nevertheless, a cult audience did exist, comprising those who knew how to read the irony within the songs. As much as these people reassured the singers in what they were doing, there was nevertheless the uncanny presence of a majority of listeners who misunderstood the singers' intentions. Notwithstanding this, many effective satirical songs were written about the South African situation, making poignant comments on class, race, ethnicity, sex, tradition, language, culture and other central aspects of South African life. The South African censor, not always the quickest to pick on satire, often

let these slip through, however, as indicated, in most instances onto an unwitting and impervious audience.

However, Patrick Ebewo (1997: 33) notes that although satire might not lead to swift socio-political change, satirical works are at the very least thought-provoking and consciousness-raising tools. He argues that “[b]efore a reformation takes place in any society, there must be an awareness of the shortcomings and vanity that erode the quality of human nature”. Satire can achieve this awareness simply through its ability to distort the familiar and disguise criticism with humour, thus circumventing the law. For this reason it has long been an effective tool in situations where freedom of speech is curtailed. However, not all satire is intended to contribute towards change. It is sometimes used to merely ridicule people who take things too seriously and as a source of amusement, a means of coping, for people in oppressive situations. For example, the incident (referred to in Chapter Four) in which Kippie Moeketsi played “Don’t fence me in” to prove his musicianship to the policemen who arrested him. Oblivious to the ridicule of the moment, and satisfied that Moeketsi was indeed a musician, the police released him, telling him that he played well (Gordon, 1997: 6). Certainly, Tessa Dowling (1997: 48) argues that during the apartheid era Xhosa humour often satirically subverted outward obedience and subservience by reducing the authorities to people who understand only their own languages and who are confined to the cruelty and irrationality of their rules. In so doing, the marginalized momentarily gained moral ascendancy, teasing the meanings and rules of language (and in Moeketsi’s case, the meaning of the music too). Such satirical moments had the potential to place the powerful in a position of additional ridicule: not only were they the object of derision, but the ridicule went undetected, and was exacerbated by laughter.

7.6. Making use of studio technology

Mzwakhe Mbuli became the foremost proponent of a form of dub poetry⁵ format in South Africa during the mid to late 1980s. His approach was similar to that of Linton Kwesi Johnson who successfully combined music and poetry in the context of racial friction in

⁵ Mbuli does not regard himself a dub poet, arguing that his repertoire is not restricted to mere recitation to a reggae beat (Brown, 1998:252).

the United Kingdom in the 1970s. Johnson's album *Dread Beat an' Blood* (1978) virtually defined the dub poetry genre, as did subsequent songs like "Inglan is a Bitch" (1980). Mbuli came to the attention of Lloyd Ross of Shifty Records while performing poetry to enormously popular reception at political rallies in South Africa, sometimes in front of audiences of up to 150 000 people (Brown, 1998: 213). Mbuli's popularity and confrontational poetry led to his status as the 'people's poet'. His poetry was especially strong in using "the rhetorical devices of parallelism and repetition to develop an intensity of delivery appropriate to the energies and angers of the political funeral or rally" (Brown, 1998: 247). An example of this is "Change is Pain" (1986) which uses repeated constructions – a form of jazz call-and-response – towards a rousing climax (Brown, 1998: 247):

Change is unknown in my ghetto
Change is an endless bucket system in Alexandra
Change is pain in Africa
Change is throttled by misdirected surrogates of the world
Change to a free non-racial society is certain
Revolutionary change shall set man free from bondage
And the ruins of autocracy shall fall

Shifty proposed the idea of recording Mbuli's poetry to a musical backing. He agreed to record an album. The politically overt *Change is Pain* (1986) album followed, resulting in sales of over 25 000 copies despite a complete lack of airplay. His second album, *Unbroken Spirit* (1989) recorded after two lengthy spells in detention, became Shifty's biggest selling album ever. With strong production support from Shifty, Mbuli's success points to the potential for poets to nevertheless get their message across to music listeners in recorded forms such as dub poetry. Although Mbuli's style was not as musically polished as that of Linton Kwesi Johnson, he was backed by top musicians who gave his poetry added rhythm and punch. Funky ethnic rhythms and rifts got the fans onto their feet, dancing in defiance to songs like "The Day Shall Dawn" (1986), with confrontational lyrics such as:

No state power shall legislate me not to love men
Do something to facilitate the change in Africa

Although Mbuli's poetry was popular at political rallies, his progression to recorded dub-type poetry took his message onto the streets and into the homes of thousands of South

Africans, who drew inspiration from his words and were uplifted by the upbeat defiance of the music. This certainly validates Elizabeth Tonkin's (1989: 46) point that the development of electronic media into the 1980s increasingly maintained and modified African oral traditions. Indeed, Duncan Brown (1998: 252) stressed that in the context of large-scale illiteracy and the restrictions imposed by the States of Emergency, Mbuli's performance poetry was able to convey important messages which would otherwise have been difficult to disseminate. This was true of both his live performances and recordings. However, Mbuli was never subtle in his lyrical confrontation, and so he missed the opportunity of exploiting a popular form of electronic media, in the form of radio play. Consequently his message was only heard live and on recorded copies of his albums, usually the cheaper and easier to play cassette copies.

Warrick Sony of the Kalahari Surfers also made use of studio technology to heighten the effect of his music. He used techniques such as tape loops and cut-ups to good satirical effect. Through studio dubbing, Sony would subvert statements made by apartheid politicians, giving them new meanings. An example of this was "Reasonable Men" (1985) in which part of a statement by Police Commissioner Coetzee ("It is the duty of the government to ensure that normal community life") was joined with a later statement ("will no longer be tolerated"). Thus Coetzee is quoted as saying something he never did say, but which in effect was what apartheid was all about. Likewise, in "Potential Aggressor" (1986) a speech by the Minister of Defence was spliced up and put together so that he seemingly encouraged the security forces' opposition (using humorously poor grammar):

I know that you will serve your country with loyalty, courage, dignity and honour, perform your duties with and responsibilities with diligently in order to sap the strength of the security forces, exhaust them and break their will to fight.

This subversive technique very effectively put words into the mouths of apartheid politicians, who for far too long had controlled who said what on South African radio and television, interpreting people as best suited them, often putting words into the mouths of opposition. Sony's approach constituted a subversive imitation of the processes underlying censorship. The parody and political pastiche found in the Kalahari Surfers' recordings involved the recomposition of political discourse to say something

subversively different to the original. This was a clear instance of a resistant musician creating a space of illusion that exposed a real space, a site "inside of which human life is partitioned as still more illusory" (Foucault, 1986: 27).

Sony also emphasized the importance of aesthetics, saying that he felt most comfortable confronting political issues in this manner of taking actuality and editing it in a subversive way. He commented that:

"I found that other people were writing lyrics that always felt laboured, and myself when I tried to write, the stuff felt stiff and I just felt that coming from a bourgeois happy family I hadn't had enough pain to sort of express the kind of things that perhaps other people had expressed in history, in political song history" (Doxa, 1989).

Importantly, Sony regarded the studio as an instrument, whereby the recording process itself could be used to make sounds and effects not otherwise possible. For Sony and fans of the Kalahari Surfers the victory was not in bypassing the censors by achieving airplay, but rather through subversively ridiculing and criticizing the apartheid government and getting away with it. Indeed, the Kalahari Surfers intentionally avoided submitting their music to the SABC for airplay. They simply avoided the censors, content with the satisfaction of recording subversive messages. Each recorded song was an instance of fighting back, especially those songs which turned the politicians' own words against the apartheid system, exposing the injustices and folly of apartheid ideology.

7.7 Lyrical resistance in response to repression

Many examples considered here emphasize the relationship between acts of repression and creative resistance to them, as outlined in Chapter Two. This was repeatedly demonstrated in the lyrics of resistance songs, in which musicians sang about and thereby exposed acts of repression meant to silence oppositional practices. For Balliger (1995: 14) these forms of "(o)ppositional music practices not only act as a form of resistance against domination, but generate social relationships and experience which can form the basis of new cultural sensibility and, in fact, are involved in the struggle for a new culture". As a means of exploring the manner in which the very acts and structures of repression gave rise to resistance in song lyrics, songs calling for Nelson Mandela's

release will be considered. These songs were, in their very performance, acts of resistance to censorship and repression: a refusal to remain silent and a protest against Mandela's imprisonment. But most of these songs also provided a vision of hope for South Africans, hope in a future with a new, free culture in which Mandela and all South Africans would be freed from racial oppression. Take for example Savuka's "Asimbonanga" (1987), which protested Mandela's incarceration yet included a vision of hope:

We are all islands 'till
Comes the day
We cross the burning
Water

Hugh Masakela's "Bring Him Back Home" (1985) simultaneously protested Mandela's imprisonment and offered a vision of a new South Africa. The streets of South Africa, in townships like Soweto, which at that time were patrolled by the South African Police, would one day be transformed:

Bring back Nelson Mandela
Bring him back home to Soweto
I want to see him walking down
The streets of South Africa

Sipho Mabuse's "Mandela" (1989) not only called for Mandela's release but called for an end to apartheid:

Nothing makes any
Sense at all
Until we end
This separation

These songs work well as examples of creative resistance arising from inordinately repressed spaces. The solitary prison cell is one of the most restrictive spaces within society. Often resistance from within prison cells seems extremely limited, given that very few forms of resistance can be carried out by a prisoner cut off from the outside world. Resistance songs about prisoners, such as those referred to above, simultaneously mark the musician's refusal to submit to pressure to practice self-censorship and overturns the meaning inherent in the repressive confines of the prison.

7.8 Conclusion

In the 1980s South African musicians were confronted with severe censorship in different forms. In response many of them devised innovative textual strategies for overcoming or at least bypassing censorship. In some instances they did so overtly, but most often (as has been shown), they attempted a more subtle approach by disguising their message through adjusting the lyrics, performance and working with resistance melodies in getting messages across to the audience. In most instances, the more direct the message, the less likely it was to be heard by a large audience, yet conversely, the more disguised the message, the less likely the audience was to read it as subversive or resistant. The most innovative of musicians were those who stumbled across or devised methods that somehow managed to be both overt and in some way subtle. Juluka were successful in demonstrating an intercultural and racial identity that was an integral component of their music, and effectively released albums which did not rely on heavily overt political lyrics. When they did record explicit political songs, as on *Work For All* (1983), the singles released were safe options which expressed positive sentiments about South Africa and were consequently played on SABC radio and television. Audiences who bought the album as a result of broadcast coverage were then exposed to more political songs, which, if released as singles, would not have been played on SABC and might well have brought the album to the unwanted attention of the Directorate. For other musicians, disguising words or messages meant that they at least experienced personal satisfaction at having expressed what they wanted to, yet knowing that the message was not going to be noticed by a wide audience. Even so, these strategies signified a refusal to keep totally silent and, in addition, archived particular sentiments and reflections which otherwise would not have been recorded.

The case of Juluka shows that musicians did not have to work only with song lyrics to make known their opposition to the government and its censorship policies. Indeed, more often than not, resistance through music was most successful when accompanied by broader strategies of resistance. There were many other ways of resisting the state's attempts to silence musicians. It is to these other strategies of resistance that the focus of Chapter Eight turns.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Beyond recorded textual resistance

To whom do we owe these prisons
These prisons in which we dream
To whom do we owe these songs
These songs of battlefields and bombs

(“Shore’s End (Chapter One)” [1982] – Asylum Kids

8.1 Introduction

Faced with a virtual government blockade of the airwaves, musicians with ‘subversive’ and/or resistant messages did not simply give up trying to get their music heard by South African audiences. It was shown in Chapter Seven that some musicians persevered by recording overtly resistant songs while others attempted to bypass censors through more subtle means. There is no doubt that the contribution of musicians through recorded music was critical, especially in archiving resistant music, but also in expressing oppositional sentiments and experiences. However, vinyl and cassette did pose limits to musicians wanting their music and message to be heard in an uncensored form by as wide an audience as possible. The censors’ preoccupation with recorded music caused many musicians to look elsewhere for spaces within which to express resistant ideas, going beyond the boundaries of the recorded medium to overcome censorship.

This chapter details and analyses musical resistance which took place outside of the recorded medium. Some of the strategies considered here developed out of careful attempts to bypass censorship, others were unintended consequences of censorship practices, while some developed as a normal part of musicians attempts to be heard. As is often the case in political contexts, some ordinarily normal practices took on heightened significance. For example, live musical performances could take on the appearance of informal political rallies, so that musicians simultaneously performed their music and conveyed political messages to the audience.

The innovative strategies covered in this chapter emphasize the potential for resistance in the face of censorship structures. Censorship forced musicians to devise additional ways of being heard beyond recorded music and radio play. As a result of these efforts,

musicians wanting to be heard, despite censorable messages, developed a repertoire of successful resistant musical activities. These are outlined in the following discussion.

8.2 Resistance through live performance

Within popular music there is generally a close relation between the recorded form and live performance. However, the relationship varies according to circumstance. David Shumway (1999: 197) has recognized that within different contexts there are varying expectations of live performance. It follows therefore, that potential spaces of innovation are available for musicians wanting to instil a personal mark on their performance, deciding how best to present themselves and the music they perform to the audience. In this way live performance is not as limited as are recordings: the form of presentation can alter in each instance, not only musically but in other ways too, for example comments made between songs. In this way performance is able to become "a form of communicative praxis in which meaning is always emergent, relational" (Erlmann, 1996: 16).

In live performance it was possible for performers in apartheid South Africa to include political content (different songs, alternate lyrics, political statements) perhaps too risky to include on their albums and which were (or would have been) banned from radio airplay. Live performance proved an important alternative to airplay for groups like Juluka, whose lyrics were often regarded as too controversial for airplay by the SABC (in particular). Johnny Clegg (Interview, 1998) explained that:

I saw that there was a gap that you could actually get through. And that became our platform for Juluka. We decided that even though we were not played on the radio, we could go out to the small dorps [towns], to the townships, into the rural areas.

Live performance was certainly a substitute for broadcast exposure, but it was also as an alternative space within which to undermine the dominant political landscape. This was the experience of musician Jennifer Ferguson (Interview, 1999). She noted that:

You had a sense of the importance of live work because there was so much repression on many other levels that the theatres and cabaret venues were often the only place where any kind of truth could be uttered.

Indeed, Ray Phiri (Interview, 2001) made the most of live performance opportunities to explain the figurative meanings of Stimela's songs to the audience:

I would preach a bit before I would play the song so that I could lead people to understand why I'd written this song that they liked so much ... We packaged everything under our performance. So people would look forward to the performance. That's when I would dish out the information where I could say, 'This is what I mean by x, y and z'. Then they could get deeper into the music.

Bayete also made use of live performance to explain the meaning of songs. Band member Jabu Khanyile (Interview, 2001) explained:

If you play live ... you can still talk to people, explain the songs and tell them what it is all about. So you can maybe change their mind.

The potential for live performance to be innovative in this way concerned the police and others who wished to maintain the apartheid status quo. Yet Director of Publications, Braam Coetzee, confirmed Ferguson's affirmation of live performance as a prospective liberated zone where cultural contest could occur. Coetzee (Interview, 1998) noted that it was difficult to censor live performance such as theatre:

A text in that context is a very changeable thing. It changes from evening to evening. You look at a text and you say: 'Excise these lines, cut them out of the play'. They will do that. Then the next evening they put something in its place which is much worse. It is a living thing. It is not a static thing. So that is why we never worried about these live plays and texts and music submitted. And I think that I can count on the fingers of one hand the incidents where we ever had somebody go to these events. We just ignored them and said: 'Look, if you are concerned with that, it is something for the Security people, not for us'.

For this reason the Directorate did not censor live performance, although (as discussed in Chapter Four) performances were regularly subject to police intervention through the withholding of permits or by means of harassment. Despite such constraints, there were

musicians who used live performance as a cultural practice to “passionately reinvent the ideas, symbols, and gestures that shape social life” (Diamond, 2000: 67). Indeed, Johnny Clegg (Interview, 1998) maintained that:

If you took that route you were prepared to get a few klaps¹ and to put up with a hostile environment because this activity you were doing was perceived to be threatening by that environment.

Similarly, Mzwakhe Mbuli (Personal correspondence, 1998) declared:

I was prepared to face the consequences of my own convictions... I was always prepared to be where the heat was in order to make a sound contribution.

Confrontational attitudes towards live performance ensured that it became a contested arena, undermining dominant discourses on an ongoing basis in a variety of ways. The most direct of these being live performance organized around specific political events or campaigns.

8.2.1. Political platforms and political concerts

Music performance was a central form of protest through festivals and concerts in support of various issues or campaigns, such as the ECC, detainees or striking workers. By simply appearing under the banner of a particular organization, musicians were showing their solidarity with the cause. They could simply play their music or lend vocal support to the particular cause in question. Groups like Juluka, Savuka, Bright Blue, Harari, Sakhile, the Cherry Faced Lurchers and many others appeared regularly in favour of political causes at cultural performances (see Image 8.1 for examples of posters advertising such events). Tom Fox (Interview, 1998) of Bright Blue explained the importance of these performances:

It was great to do things when you're part of the struggle, as opposed to just playing something for money. Also just feeling part of a group of people protesting... It was really nice to have people sing along to stuff knowing they felt the same. They couldn't express themselves but they could express it through the

¹Hit around or slapped.

music. The best sort of music is when you write something and it becomes other people's stuff. It's not yours really; you become part of a group.

Fox's account of the audience's relationship with Bright Blue's music underlines musicians' ability to participate in what Eyerman and Jamison (1998: 160) refer to as



Image 8. 1 Posters advertising musicians appearing at political and cultural events (Poster Collective, 1991: 162-167).

“exemplary action”: innovative forms of understanding which impact upon broader established cultures. The bond between the musician and the audience emphasizes that “culture functions by means of an insoluble bond uniting people. It is a question of a way of performing a culture” (Pavis, 2000: 105). The performance of progressive music and song contributes towards the construction of a new meaning, culminating in an altered “collective identity formation” (Eyerman and Jamison, 1998: 161). By performing on a political platform musicians become aligned with, if not a part of, a broader social and/or political movement. This movement provides opportunities for musicians to be innovative in challenging dominant discourses. Jamison and Eyerman (1998: 165) suggest that within this context the musician can “become a political as well as a cultural agent, and thus help shape an emergent cultural formation”.

An important aspect of the relation between musician and audience was the two-way flow of inspiration. As indicated, it was not only the musician who inspired audiences, but audiences, through their support and enthusiasm, encouraged musicians. For example, Jennifer Ferguson (Interview, 1999) remembered:

performing in Langa where there were a lot of women's organizations and there was a sense of you're identifying with the structures because that was all there was. A sort of political cradle that was very tangible especially in the Cape.

This 'political cradle' was able to nurture Ferguson and give her inspiration which encouraged her political commitment. Likewise, Richard Ellis (Interview, 1999) noted that:

The ECC concerts were to me valuable... We were allowed the freedom of expression, the freedom to play the music we wanted to play, and really good support because people knew what they were there for. And they knew what the bands were there for, and no matter whether a guy came up with an acoustic guitar and sang about peace and love and hugging a tree, or whether the next band came up and said they'd kick the shit out of everything, they had the support! So it was very important.

The importance of the political movement context extended to musicians participating who did not even perform lyrical music. Many jazz musicians performed on political platforms, as did some other popular musicians who performed music without lyrics. Karin Rutter (Interview, 1998) of Flux explained that:

I think we felt that we could play a role through ... the venues we played, the styles of music that we incorporated and we actually appeared supporting various issues, whether it be End Conscription or whatever. Although we may not have used words in terms of lyrics, certainly in other ways I think we felt that it was very important to make a contribution culturally to what was happening politically and socially in the country.

Crucially, the sentiments of the above musicians illustrate the importance of live performance as a means by which political expression could take place for musicians otherwise frustrated by lack of airplay. Fox, Ferguson, Ellis and Rutter all expressed a

sense of accomplishment at being able to 'make a contribution' to an alternative culture, and to voice their protest against injustices within the South African society of the time. Live performance on a political platform therefore filled a vital gap within a cultural terrain thwarted by censorship. It was a way of getting overt political messages to audiences, but it also provided a framework within which to contextualize one's music.

8.2.2 Alternative venues as free spaces for resistance musicians

Given censorship on South African airwaves, alternative live venues became important free spaces within which musicians could be heard. 'Alternative venues' were those venues in which diverse political and social expression could be practiced without interference by the venue management. These venues often became areas of temporary escape and places where injustices could be tackled in almost 'carnavalesque' (Bakhtin, 1984) fashion. Musicians and their audiences could experience moments of reconstitutive rebellion characterized by a "temporary loss of boundaries" (Russo, 1997: 320). This is most typified by the vaudeville shape which Aeroplanes concerts took at Jameson's in Johannesburg. The Aeroplanes, who insisted on playing "no normal music in an abnormal society" (Bauer, 1996: 33), explored the dynamics of live performance to incorporate theatrical devices to enhance the performance of their evenings. Band member, Carl Bekker (Interview, 1998) explained that:

Our first thing was to have a jol. And secondly, in that whole milieu of the time it was inevitable and also necessary to make political statements ... And also what happened was that my friend James [Wylie] who was an actor also liked to channel a whole lot of political frustrations through the band. And he brought a whole lot of other actors into the show, so we had a thing whenever we played it was like a whole show, it was like a whole vaudeville evening ... We'd satirize things, and taken as a whole, the actors would come on and do these sketches that were really funny and really satirical. If you looked at the whole evening, it was quite subversive actually of a whole lot of things that were going on in the '80s. But it wouldn't necessarily be overt political statements. It would be attacking cultural statements like moustaches or South African males.

Renee Veldsman (Interview, 1998) of Via Afrika felt that:

Even though we had the apartheid laws and that sort of thing, we found freedom in music, and I think lots of groups felt that way, and that's why we got some great music out in the '80s. It was kind of like a club, a secret place to go where we could be free... like the club in Berlin during the war.

Indeed, some live venues, like that of Jameson's in Johannesburg in particular, became places of respite, where alternative people could congregate with like-minded people and enjoy resistant and alternative music. Charlotte Bauer (1996: 33) agreed with Veldsman's view (above) of the cabaret circuit (of which music and Jameson's were a crucial component) echoing "the wild-eyed angst and gallows humour of pre-World War II Berlin". Certainly, Gary Hertselman of the Kerels (Interview, 1998) noted that:

What was happening at Jameson's at the time was a kind of a musical movement against the politics of the time, against the government of the time.

Musician Jannie van Tonder (Interview, 1998) remembered how apartheid:

fostered a kind of struggle energy that binds people together. They had a common goal, and made the music much more special than it otherwise would have been.

Carl Bekker (Interview, 1998) confirmed that:

A normal Friday or Saturday night at Jameson's was actually an incredibly hedonistic affair. I think there was a feeling that shit was going down and nobody knew what was going to happen, but that things were just absolutely and irrevocably changing. So there was a fear and there was also an optimism that the Groot Krokodil² and all those okes were going to get kicked out, so we were nearing the end, you know. But that stuff for me was quite a decadent response in a way: a hedonistic and decadent response. And that was the rock 'n' roll that we were placed in... There definitely was a sense of camaraderie amongst the jollers. But it wasn't specifically articulated.

Venues like Jameson's provided bands and audiences with a place to meet without having to strictly conform to a particular form of left politics, but nevertheless immerse themselves in a subversive anti-establishment atmosphere. According to Karin Rutter

² Big Crocodile, P. W. Botha.

(1999: 1) Cape Town venues such as Scratch, The Joseph Stone, the Observatory Community Hall and Mitchell's Plain Civic were characterized by a spirit of inspiration, hope, communality and serious 'jolling'. Rutter (1991: 1) explained that:

"People came to these places because they had something to say, and something to hear. And the message was clear. Stop the madness. Now".

Importantly, the 'madness' against which musicians and audiences rebelled related to a range of issues and forms of oppression. Resistant musicians were drawn to these venues because they were performance spaces which offered them a receptive audience, a place to be heard, as well as a means of possible income. Audiences in turn were drawn to these sorts of live venues to release an energy built up by the frustration of a series of official structures put in their way.

A further example of this phenomenon – of subversive celebration of music – came in the form of audiences seeking out and listening to banned music, to some extent simply because it had been banned, but also because of the banned message. The liberal press occasionally exposed instances of censorship both by the SABC and the Directorate, so that a section of the public became aware that music was being censored, even if they did not get to hear the music on the radio. An unintended consequence of this was that it provided the audience with an opportunity to engage in 'subversive' activity through the consumption of music declared undesirable by the government. This was epitomized by a protest at Wits University described by Gary Rathbone (Interview, 1998):

A big protest had been called and it had been banned by the magistrate. So we had a crisis meeting up at the SRC and I said, 'Well why don't we take speakers out on the lawn. We will take our mobile system from the station, put them out on the lawn and what we will do is just play (because we were getting all our stuff on import, so we had a lot of protest music, good dance protest music. Special AKA: 'Free Mandela', anything like that we could find). And we will just play music. Let's see and if they say you are having a gathering we will just say it is a party and people here are dancing.' And we had the situation, we were by the Social Sciences building and the line of police was coming over this side and we had the speakers out and everybody dancing.

Rathbone's account is of a mass celebration of banned resistant music, but a similar seeking out and enjoyment of banned music also occurred on an individual level. It was not unusual for South Africans travelling overseas to look out for and bring back music that had been banned in the country. People also imported banned music, in the hope that it would escape the attention of customs officials. Local releases of South African music were already available, and usually easier to get hold of. This music could then be played at parties in private venues or simply enjoyed as a subversive activity in itself.

8.2.3 Exploring the other/crossover/non-racial performances

In a society in which inter-racial mixing was discouraged, where it was deemed correct to keep a distance from people of different race and ethnic groups, it was always likely that musicians would make use of inter-racial performances to challenge the status quo. Until the mid-1980s members of different race groups had to live in separate areas, were not allowed to marry each other, and in many instances were not allowed to share the same public amenities such as park benches, beaches, cinemas and theatres. During the 1970s bands like Afro-rock styled Hawk rocked the boat by becoming multiracial, although as indicated in Chapter Four, the black members played behind curtains during live performances. Increasingly, politicized bands refused to play in front of whites-only audiences. For example, Sipho Gumede (Interview, 1998) of Spirit's Rejoice described how they challenged apartheid thinking at venues:

There was so much segregation and yet the band was so powerful and in demand in the jazz clubs. But the policy of the band was that we don't play for whites only, you know we have to change that, and if there are no black people in the venue then we don't take that contract. So we tried to change a lot of stuff in the contract because we used to say 'Yes, we would like to play in your venue, but do you have black people?' And when they said, 'No', we would say 'No, sorry, we can't take the gig'. And then they would come back and say 'Look, our license doesn't allow blacks, but we will make a special arrangement, seeing that you insist on that'. And we would say 'Yes, we insist, otherwise we're not going to come and play.' So we changed a lot of venues.

The group who most successfully challenged the racial separateness of apartheid was Juluka, who became popular in 1976 with their single "Woza Friday". With the release of their album *Universal Men* in 1979 their popularity grew, for the first time capturing the interest and support of white youth in South Africa. Clegg (Interview, 1998) explained:

What we started to do was to try and expand and find a way to explore what it was for me as a white person to be an African. I explored that quite intensively in a lot of my lyrics. And the issue of being a white African and finding a place for European culture in a base of African music was an important aspect of what I was doing. On the other hand I also wanted to be a platform whereby traditional music could be appreciated from another angle ... we created a context in our live performances, we created a platform, we heightened their awareness, especially the white audiences. And black audiences although they never understood some of the more cryptic lyrics I wrote in English, they felt that part of their musical culture was being supplemented by somebody who was actually serious about how he was expressing himself. So we had so many different ways of mixing, and so many different ways of experimenting.

For blacks this made him very popular, but the threat of Clegg's association with 'the other' was too much for many apartheid supporters, as indicated in Chapter Four, leading to bannings from radio and being banned by the Pietersburg Town Council who were afraid of the effect of Clegg's ethnic otherness on the 'civilized' local audiences. David Kramer (Interview, 1998) emphasized the importance of Juluka as a stage act, of using performance as protest:

If I think of Johnny Clegg, what he really achieved initially was phenomenal. When I first went to a concert of his in Cape Town – it was the first time I'd ever seen Johnny Clegg – it took all our breath away. And I remember everyone was on the edge of their seats. It felt like a Beatles concert. And here we saw these whites and blacks performing in this band together, this new kind of South Africa/African Zulu music, and it was just that whole thing was so exciting because it was a living example of what South Africa could be. So that – the

image of that – and the excitement was really where the power lay in what Johnny was doing. Regardless of what he was singing.

Importantly, Kramer points to the strength of performance as a means of resistance/protest, of cultural performance as a contested terrain. Although Clegg's lyrics often expressed political sentiments, for Kramer the importance of his music was in the image of racial collaboration and non-racism revealed to the audience through Juluka's performance. Johnny Clegg created an especially strong fascination for audiences, as a white who has crossed over to 'the other'³. In terms of a white audience, Frith (1992: 180-181) argues that this figure is one of both white fear and white desire. For two reasons: firstly, "as the shocking, exotic, primitive *other* of bourgeois respectability", and secondly, "as 'nature' as opposed to 'culture,' a means of access to the pre-social, to 'innocence' (defined against the civilized, the sophisticated, the rational, the controlled...)". Within the context of apartheid this point is especially significant. White youth in particular were drawn to the image presented by Juluka, precisely because the image on show contrasted with apartheid ideology and the bourgeois and racist respectability of their parents' generation. Lipsitz (1994: 54) argues that in such circumstances the white audience is able to "identify with transgression while at the same time distancing themselves from it by connecting the violation of cultural norms with the ostensibly 'natural' and biologically-driven urges of a despised (racial and ethnic) group". In providing the audience with a glimpse, an insight into black culture, Clegg tapped into a forbidden curiosity which allowed the audience to safely consider an alternative at a distance. However, the analytic categories of 'other' 'cultural' and 'natural' should not be stretched too far, should not give the impression that Juluka's performances were cultural peep shows. Nhlanhla Ngcobo (1982: 6) points to the wide acceptance and popularity amongst black South Africans at Juluka's successful

³ It must not be forgotten however, that it was Clegg's power and privilege as a white middle class male that provided him with the luxury to imagine himself as 'the other'. As Lipsitz (1994:54) – speaking of white minstrel performances in the U.S.A. – notes: "The enormous rewards available to whites pretending to be Black were never available to Black performers denied control over their own performances and always forbidden to think of themselves as 'white'". Nevertheless it should be noted that Clegg's embrace of Zulu identity – at the time - was at considerable risk of police harassment and was not simply a marketing exercise.

intervention on a socio-cultural level in dissolving racial stereotypes and prejudice. In Juluka's music and performance: "The common error of equating 'traditional' with 'primitive' and 'Western' with 'civilised' is challenged and replaced by attitudes of compatibility and equality" (Ngcobo, 1982: 6).

Juluka's openness in collaboratively exploring a black culture in the South African context, where for a long time it was illegal to even share a park bench, communicated a vision of a different South Africa to the audience. And as indicated by Ngcobo, this did not only relate to whites in the audience, but too blacks too. Music was thus used to prepare Juluka audiences (through the image of inter-racial collaboration and freedom of association) for a post-apartheid future. The imagery of Juluka acted as a means of publicly challenging apartheid notions of racial and ethnic separateness. The very justification and legitimacy of representations of apartheid inequality were threatened by Juluka's demonstration of an alternative way, that not only challenged apartheid's values, but which, in every instance, reflected a freedom more alluring and liberating than the claustrophobia of racial separateness.

There were other groups who also put forward a strong message through being non-racial bands. The Dynamics tried to say something by setting an example, as blacks and whites enjoying themselves making music together on stage. Karin Rutter (Interview, 1998), who played in various bands in Cape Town during the 1980s, explained the importance of this approach:

The cultural boycott was on at the time which meant that things were pretty insular in the country. And as one knows, radio stations were divided – TV stations as well – in terms of streaming music to various listeners. And I think for myself it was important to actually break out of that and to cross as many cultural barriers as possible I suppose, particularly in the '80s when everybody was trying to throw up the barriers.

In the late 1980s Mango Groove very successfully crossed-over African and Western styles of music. Crossover initiatives were clear examples of Lipsitz's notion of 'strategic anti-essentialism' because they defied apartheid norms of separate ethnic music styles. Indeed, Ingrid Byerly (1996: 113-116) discusses a variety of collaborative musical

initiatives which served the purpose of breaking down many barriers between different groups of people in South Africa, even between Afrikaans folk styles and Western rock and so on. She argued that:

“Through complex configurations of lyrics, melodies, harmonies instrumentations, rhythms, styles and forms people were able to express not only social fragmentations but also social unions. Furthermore, the increasing use of code-switching, not merely linguistic but also musical juxtapositions echoed social tension and conflict resolution in song. While the use of folk themes or traditional instrumentations signified desires for ethnic preservation or renewal, the frequent merging of intercultural musical components increasingly suggested both the desire for non-racial nationalism, as well as critical presentations of irony and humor (Byerly, 1996: 116)”.

The importance of crossover, multicultural and non-racial music performance was thus in challenging apartheid barriers, including racist legislation and censorship policies. Those musicians who pursued these styles and formations used music as “dangerous crossroads” Lipsitz (1994) to express their own ideals, to contest existing injustices and to challenge the audience to see things differently, to reposition themselves according to a vision of a post-apartheid South Africa.

8.2.4 The Voëlvry tour

As has been clearly shown, many musicians used live performance in different ways to take resistant messages to South African audiences. Sometimes performances took the form of tours of South Africa, and even included more than one group touring together. For example, in 1989 Bayete and Sakhile toured with their ‘Sounds of Africa’ tour, taking resistant messages to audiences to people all over the country. These included Bayete songs like “Zabalaza”, a call to people to participate in the struggle against apartheid. The most audacious and confrontational of these tours was the Voëlvry tour during 1989.

The object of the tour was to promote the ‘alternative Afrikaans’ message of a few Shifty Records artists. Koos Kombuis and Johannes Kerkerrel had released albums

through Shifty, challenging the conservative politics of the Nationalist government and older generations of Afrikaners. Voëlvry resisted apartheid and the conservative values traditionally associated with Afrikanerdom. Many songs had humorous and confrontational lyrics dealing with politics, lifestyle and religion. These lyrics often attacked symbols of Afrikaner nationalism and Calvinism, like political leaders (especially P. W. Botha) and the church. Kerkorrel's Gereformeerde Blues Band sang "Wat 'n Vriend Het Ons in PW" (2002, "What a Friend We Have in PW") to the tune of "What a Friend We Have in Jesus", a move guaranteed to raise the ire of pious Christians. Kombuis sang "Where Do You go to PW?" (2002, a rendition of Peter Sarstedt's [1975] "Where Do You go to My Lovely?") and the Gereformeerde Blues Band expressed their disdain for PW Botha with "Sit Dit Af" (1989, Turn it off) a song about turning off the television whenever PW Botha's face appeared. Kerkorrel's "Donker Donker Land" (1989, Dark dark land) painted a bleak picture of the country in contrast to the lyrical descriptions of earlier folk songs. The song described "a dark country crippled by dissent, isolation and drought" (Byerly, 1996: 232). Only when the drought breaks will everything be washed clean:

And it's a dark dark land
 The seasons turn the stars burn
 The sun turns red, we have landed
 On the wrong side of the moon...

And the soldiers come marching
 Each carrying a weapon
 There's a bomb in every supermarket
 And the sound of breaking glass
 And something must break
 But after seven years of drought it begins to rain...⁴

With challenging lyrics like these, Voëlvry:

"offered a critical re-appraisal of hegemonic Afrikaner culture. This message was supported with such enthusiasm that Afrikaans alternative popular music came to be seen as the manifestation of the emergence of an Afrikaans counter-culture, a dangerous youth-oriented social movement" (Jury, 1996: 99).

⁴ Translation by Ingrid Byerly (1996: 233).

Musically, the Voëlvry musicians (the central three being Kerkorrel, Kombuis and Bernoldus Niemand) reacted to the traditional Afrikaans popular music of the likes of Carike Keuzenkamp, Marie Van Zyl and Sonja Herholdt. These latter musicians' music performed a jingoistic function in support of apartheid society. These conservative musicians operated within a context of what Sonja Herholdt (Interview, 2001) retrospectively described as:

false protection ... protected by the regime, the South African government. They were living in a bubble.

This bubble extended to army bases on the border, where musicians toured, promoting the palatable Afrikaans culture of home. One of Herholdt's songs was "Waterblommetjies" (1978), typical of the Afrikaans 'lekkerliedjie', indeed a song in a political bubble. It was apt therefore, that the alternative Afrikaans cabaret show *Piekniek by Dingaen*, a forerunner of the Voëlvry movement, included the song "Petrolbommetjies" (Petrol bombs) sung to the same tune as "Waterblommetjies", with similar but subversive lyrics.

The Voëlvry tour was organised around Afrikaans musicians performing these sorts of counter-hegemonic lyrics. In the process political links with non-music organizations were fostered. Tour organizer, Dirk Uys (Interview, 1998) approached Lloyd Ross of Shifty Records with the idea of the tour:

I went to Lloyd and I said, 'Listen, why don't we do a tour? And put these okes on the road?' And Lloyd said, 'Ja, cool idea'. And I went to Vrye Weekblad and I got some money out of them. Not a lot, but R10 000. And we also went to IDASA, spoke to Van Zyl Slabbert, and he gave us a bit of money. So we had a bit of budget and then I organized the tour from the Shifty offices.

From the outset the idea behind the Voëlvry tour was to take Afrikaans protest music into big and small centres alike, to audiences who otherwise would not hear the music, most of which had been banned from radio play. The organizers and musicians believed that it was imperative not to shy away from the heartland of Afrikanerdom. Consequently, tour venues were arranged in places as diverse as Johannesburg and Bethlehem. Voëlvry certainly had a confrontational element to it: musicians left the comfort zones of the

liberal Black Sun and Jameson's and ventured into venues in white rural areas like the Kroonstad Civic Centre. Robot Torpor (1989: 7) aptly captured the spirit of contest presented by places like Kroonstad. He described the "the rock 'n' roll ossewa" driven by a group of "Afrikanarchists", fuelled by a desire to remodel their culture, "exhuming Afrikaans, oiling its wheels and pulling it forward" (Torpor, 1989: 7). Thus the Voëlvry tour arrived in Kroonstad:

"a town you yearn to leave, about 3km before you arrive. A dorp where to be young is comparable to the joys of being a three-legged greyhound. A place where people don't have sex on Sundays in case it leads to dancing" (Torpor, 1989: 7).

These locations themselves seemed to be integrally linked to the parody and pastiche that flowed out of the Voëlvry music. The music was not a reproduction of the real, but rather constructed a process attempting to change the social world (Ulmer, 1983: 86). Gary Hertselman (Interview, 1998), who played with Kerkorrel in the Gereformeerde Blues Band, described how:

There was an element of fun there essentially, initially. And then as the momentum grew with the Voëlvry tour and people starting banning songs and banning gigs and closing venues and slashing car tyres and that kind of thing, I started to realize the importance of what was going on. And focused on the fact that what we're saying here lyrically – well not *me* essentially, but people like Kerkorrel, Kombuis and Bernoldus Niemand – are saying here essentially in their lyrics, that they are saying with humour, but they are approaching extremely serious topics here, and then I became aware of what this movement was.

Johannes Kerkorrel (Interview, 1998) elaborated, saying that:

It was very important just to break through the whole bland category that people and Afrikaans youths were put in at the time. So if they were Afrikaans they automatically supported P. W. Botha and the state, which I knew from experience wasn't true. There were a lot of people who thought differently and I thought that the greatest threat we posed at the time was the fact that we protested against the state and against policies of the National Party and especially the apartheid

policies. And because we did it in Afrikaans that is why they reacted so violently against us. Like sending the Security Police to our gigs and sabotaging us and banning our concerts and banning the records. I thought that was because we dared to voice our opposition in Afrikaans. If it was English it may have been tolerated because English people were supposed to be against [the policies of the National Party], but because it was Afrikaans it was a bigger threat.

Willem Möller (Interview, 1998), guitarist for the Gereformeerde Blues Band, acknowledged that the significance of the Voëlvry tour was indeed that it took an alternative message to Afrikaner youth in a popular manner, appealing to their rebelliousness against their parents' generation and the government:

The impact that the Voëlvry tour had – which was enormous, we didn't quite expect it – but what it told us was that for people to go "Sit Dit Af" [Turn it off] and not get locked up, was a major liberation. And also realizing that there are *thousands* of other people who feel the same way, that you might not have been aware of, but they're there, and you're not alone in feeling that way. So that was a major liberation. It was a unifying thing. And I think especially for a whole generation of Afrikaans-speaking people, who didn't want to be part of that whole Afrikaans thing. Because it did have an Afrikaans stamp on it – you know, not just the white South African stamp. They didn't want to be a part of it, they were not proud of that heritage. They wanted to be somewhere else and they became known as alternative Afrikaners ... It will be a major thing in their life forever, because it just made them realize that they're not alone, they're not a freak for feeling that way, that there're thousands of other people who feel the same way and that they were actually right. And that the real values that they were brought up with as Afrikaners, you know Christianity and love your neighbour and that kind of stuff, they actually, I think, took that seriously, that they became for many people the issue. Not the falsity and the lies, but to actually be sincere about it. And turn the situation around and still stay true to what they were brought up with. I think that became a big thing for many people.

All in all 85 000 people attended Voëlvry concerts as the entourage toured the country (Vinassa, 1992: 17). This widespread attendance illustrates the importance of innovative approaches to performance as a means of being heard despite censorship on the airwaves (all of the politically contentious Voëlvry music was banned from SABC airplay). The effect was to challenge Afrikaner support for apartheid from within (Kombuis, 2002). But musicians needed courage to achieve this: to be prepared to take on the supporters of the apartheid system who inevitably tried to stop them. Koos Kombuis (Interview, 1998) explained that:

It wasn't so much a jol. It was a terribly difficult time. We were under tremendous stress, and there was consciousness all the time that we were in danger. I mean the worst that actually happened was that they banned us from Stellenbosch campus, RAU campus; they slashed our tyres at one gig. They threw stink bombs. No one actually attacked us, but there was always the feeling that some mad right wing guy could come and shoot us. It took a lot of guts. And there were dangerous moments.

It was the commitment of the Voëlvry musicians, together with the innovative strategy of an extensive tour to a diverse range of South African venues which made it possible for their resistant music to be heard. Although the music itself was not alternative, simply rhythm and blues, the message aptly appealed to disenchanted youth in places where the Voëlvry musicians performed. In this way airplay was rendered less important than it otherwise would have been. On the back of this effort many of the songs associated with the Voëlvry tour became part of a resistant soundtrack of that age for many Afrikaans (and also English) youth.

8.3 Alternative airplay

The discussion so far has emphasized the importance of live performance as an alternative means of getting one's music heard by an audience living within the sonic claustrophobia of broadcast censorship. As a result of live performance, thousands of South Africans were exposed to music that they would not have heard had they relied solely on commercial radio. However, musicians in search of an audience for music

which had been or could be censored music were sometimes able to find alternative sources of exposure to live performance and airplay on the established commercial radio stations. The most common alternative source of airplay in the 1980s was campus or student radio. Felix Guattari (1993: 85) contrasted a trend in North America "towards hyper-concentrated systems controlled by the apparatus of state, of monopolies, of big political machines" with initiatives "toward miniaturized systems that create the real possibility of a collective appropriation of the media." As has been established, the South African broadcast scenario of the 1980s was very centralized, but there were nevertheless indications of 'miniaturized systems' developing. While there were no established pirate stations (other than Radio Freedom which operated from outside the country and was not specifically a popular music station, see further discussion below), student radio offered a potentially radical alternative to the centralized world of state and commercial radio.

Benjy Mudie (Interview, 1998) of WEA Records recounted how National Wake were refused airplay on SABC and so WEA submitted copies of their album to student radio stations. The Voice of Wits in particular played their music. Gary Rathbone (Interview, 1998) who worked as a disc jockey at Voice of Wits confirmed that the station exploited broadcast regulation loopholes to play resistant and other controversial music:

We were only broadcasting with a landline to canteens and residences. So we could actually get away with a hell of a lot because it was harder for them to monitor. Most harassment we did get on that score was usually from boorish engineering students, who would hear you playing songs that they didn't like and want to come up and threaten to beat you up and report you to the security police. But we were playing basically anything we could get our hands on.

Similarly, Dirk Uys managed to arrange for the Voëlvry music to be played on student radio. This was done in conjunction with extensive touring so that student audiences were familiar with the music when the tour came to town. It also enhanced album sales of the musicians involved in the tour. Dirk Uys (Interview, 1998) related how:

I worked a lot on the campus stations, to get our stuff played on campus. My whole strategy of the Voëlvry movement, the tour itself, was I figured to hit the student market. Because the students go home, they have got little brothers and

sisters at home. They have friends in the army, that whole thing. So we had a lot of success there.

Certainly record companies like WEA, Shifty and Mountain Records sent copies of their music, including resistant music, to student radio stations. Rhodes Music Radio (RMR), for example, has a comprehensive collection of albums submitted by these record companies. These include National Wake, the Cherry Faced Lurchers, Mzwakhe Mbuli, Roger Lucey, Kalahari Surfers, Jennifer Ferguson, Koos Kombuis, the Gereformeerde Blues Band, Sankomota and David Kramer (including *Bakgat* [1981], completely censored on SABC). Albums by these performers were played to varying degrees by different campus radio stations according to station policy and individual presenters.

The main broadcast alternative for overtly resistant music was Radio Freedom. However, Radio Freedom was only available on short wave, making it inaccessible for many South Africans. Short wave radios were more expensive and Radio Freedom's reception was poor. Listening to music on Radio Freedom was therefore more of a resistant activity than an aesthetic experience, amidst the sound of long-distance static. Accessibility aside, Radio Freedom did not focus specifically on popular music, but music was an integral part of the station's programmes. A lot of the music was in the form of recorded freedom songs as sung at political rallies. However, Radio Freedom announcer and producer (and later Head of the station), Golden Neswiswi (Interview, 2003), noted that the station played any resistant, anti-government music it could get hold of. This included exiled musicians such as Miriam Makeba and Hugh Masakela in addition to South-African based musicians including Stimela, Mzwakhe Mbuli and Johnny Clegg. The station also played foreign protest singers like Fela Kuti and Bob Marley. Music was played everyday as part of routine programming, but there was one weekly showcase programme for resistant popular music, an hour-long "Sounds of Artists" show on Saturdays.

A further innovative means of alternative airplay pursued by some musicians was to provide shebeen owners with copies of their albums. For many decades live music performance had been an essential part of shebeen life (Coplan, 1985: 83), and when musicians were not available, recorded music was a ready substitute. Ray Phiri (Reitov,

1998) actively delivered Stimela albums to shebeens, and in the process succeeded in securing exposure in some urban areas, for music not always played on radio.

South Africa never developed a strong pirate radio station, such as Radio Caroline off the coast of Britain or those stations (such as Free Radio Berkeley) that form part of the 'Free Radio' culture in North America. The reasons most likely had to do with fear of the heavy-handed apartheid state and to a lesser extent the expense involved. Nevertheless, as has been shown, some alternatives to the mainstream radio stations were available, and on occasion these were used fairly successfully. When used in conjunction with other strategies, as was done by the Voëlvry organizers, greater success was achieved.

8.4 Resistant visual imagery and information

The focus so far has been very much on the music itself, whether recorded or performed live. However, popular music rarely exists in complete isolation from visual imagery and information (printed text). Album covers, sleeve notes, concert flyers, posters and programmes and printed imagery displayed on stage were all visual means through which musicians could frame their music. In so doing they could communicate ideas to their audience not necessarily available in the recorded form or performance alone, especially in a context of censorship committees scrutinizing the recorded form.

8.4.1 Album covers

The most common means by which visual imagery was used by musicians to capture images of subversion and resistance was through information contained on album covers. Although not directly a part of the music, album covers were sometimes used to convey messages or provide information which would not otherwise get through to the album buyer. Usually the information provided (whether text or image) provided a framework within which to listen to the album, almost a guide on how to read the music. For example, Flash Harry, who mostly wrote satirical songs about love and relationships, included a photocopied picture of a torn-up R10 note on their record sleeve simply because it was against the law to reproduce national currency and to show their scorn for

a national symbol of wealth (see Image 8.2). Keith Berelowitz (Interview, 1998) explained that:

I don't care for politics, yet you couldn't escape what was happening on a social level in South Africa. Nobody could, I mean even if you just wanted to be a pop star or whatever, you were going to be influenced by what was happening around you. It crept into your daily life. So I think that there was no escape from it. It had to be there in your music and that is one of the things that gave South African pop music its identity. You couldn't get away from it ... For example, on the second album I had on the inner sleeve a ten rand note that was torn up. And I knew you weren't allowed to make photocopies of money and stuff like that. But I thought 'fuck this now, you know this is a very innocent kind of thing to do' ... But everybody did those things. It was either in the album cover or something they would wear, or something in the lyric or anything.

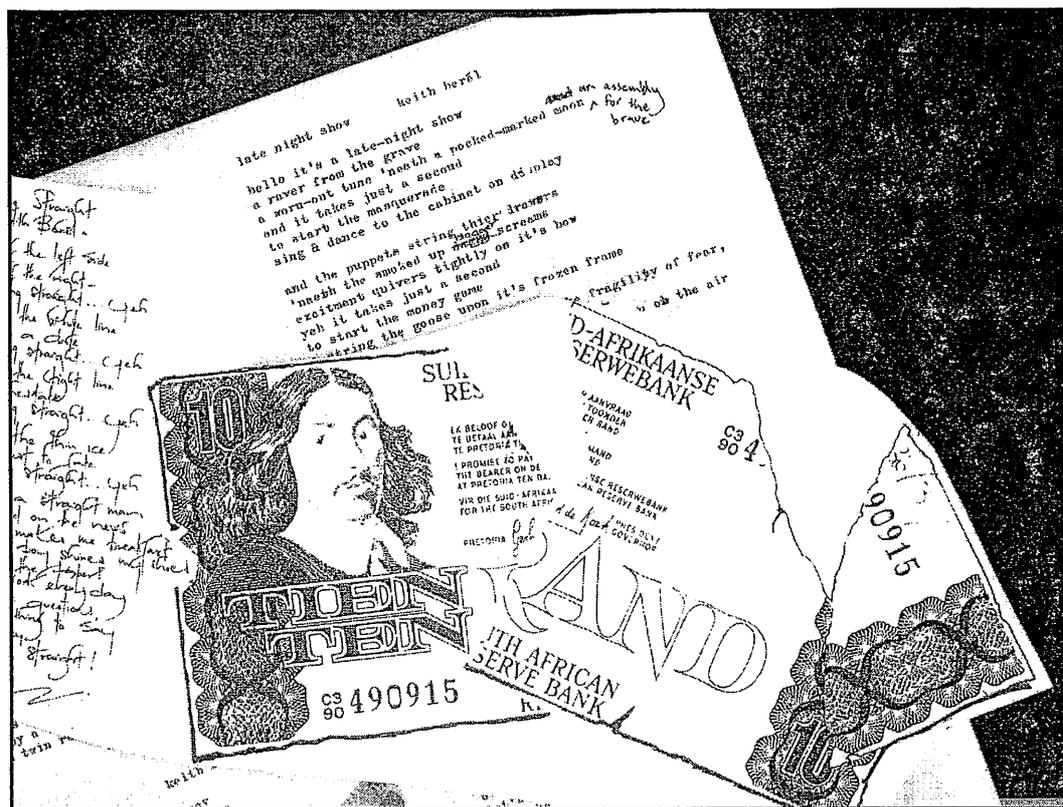


Image 8.2 Subversive images from Flash Harry's inner sleeves.

Berelowitz's comments reveal the interplay between structure and resistance to it. In a simple response to the myriad of government regulations, even a non-musical gesture of transgression became part of the Flash Harry record album package. The photocopy of the torn-up note, although not necessarily an indication of an anti-apartheid stance, suggested an anti-government rebelliousness. The transgressive stance was accentuated by the unconventional cursive hand-written form in which the lyrics were reproduced. This was especially so on their first album, in which errors were simply crossed out on the sleeve, intentionally avoiding a slick conformist package. The lyrics were badly typed and words that had been mistakenly omitted were added in handwritten form, as in a sub-edited article (see Image 8.2).

This was typical of the punk aesthetic especially the style of music journalist Edwin Pouncey who "eschewed slick technique" (Lawley, 1999: 106) and whose crudely drawn and shoddy style became a defining feature of punk cartooning. Likewise, Gary Panter produced drawings which, true to the spirit of punk, "tried to embrace all the smudges and mistakes" (Panter, in Lawley, 1999: 107). The underlining idea was to support a seemingly basic approach accessible to anyone regardless of his or her competence while also being bluntly anti-corporate and aesthetically correct.

Shifty Records often used album covers as a means of making statements of protest. On the front cover of their *A Naartjie in our Sosatie* (1985) compilation of rebel rhythms, Warrick Sony sticks out his tongue and pulls an 'up yours'/puking face, while wearing a T-shirt which quotes a line from the Nationalist government's national anthem 'Die stem': 'Ons vir jou Suid Afrika' (We for you South Africa). The two images are clearly juxtaposed, illustrating Shifty's opinion of Nationalist Party apartheid ideology (see Image 8.3). On the record label itself three stick figures are shown in the form of 'Hear no evil, see no evil, speak no evil'. The three members of the Malopoets are photographed in a similar pose on the front and reverse sides of their self-titled *Malopoets* (1985) album. And the cover of Edi Niederlander's *Hear No Evil* (1989) album reveals a drawing of an African woman in the 'hear no evil' stance (see Image 8.4).

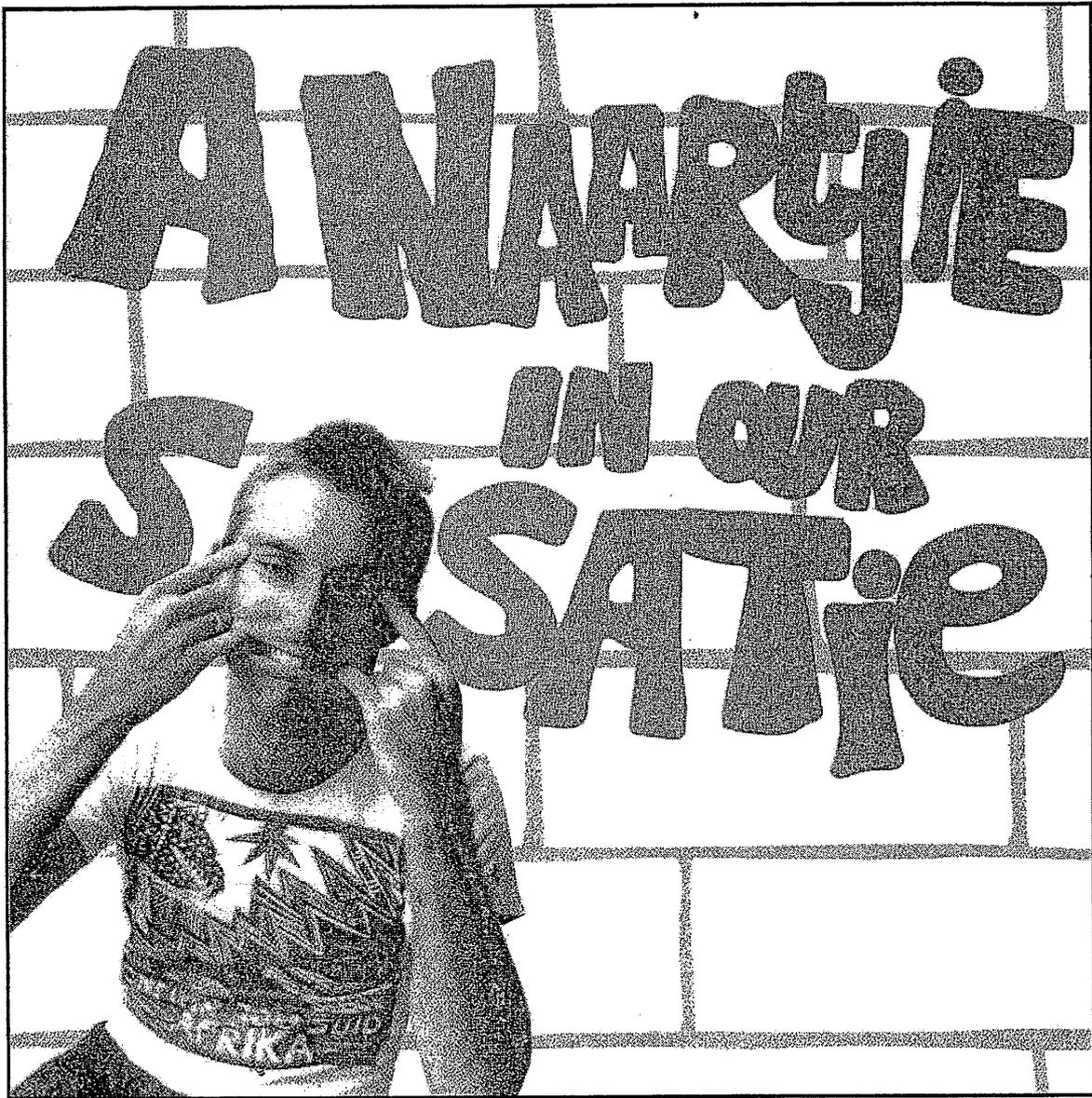


Image 8. 3 Shifty's *A Naartjie in our Sosatie* cover.

On the cover of the local release of the Shifty *Forces Favourites* (1985) anti-militarization compilation album, a portable radio separates two images: on the top a line of soldiers are shown standing at attention in a line, capturing the essence of military conformism. The lower image shows a group of people dressed in colourful clothes happily dancing (see Image 8.5).



Image 8. 4 Album covers and inner sleeves: The Malopoets (background) hear no evil, speak no evil, see no evil, as do the Shifty stick men (bottom right). Edi Niederlander's *Hear No Evil* cover is at the bottom left.

Shifty's *Voëlvry* (1988) compilation album cover also makes good use of symbolism. The cover illustration is of a young 'boeremeisie' dressed in traditional Voortrekker dress and bonnet gleefully flying as free as a bird over a Johannesburg urban cityscape. She has clearly been freed of traditional expectations, of the rural conservatism that usually acts as a backdrop for women historically depicted in Voortrekker garb. The reverse side of the album cover is subtitled 'Afrikaanse Musiek Vir Vandag' (Afrikaans music for today). The suggestion is that the music acts as a soundtrack for the liberated Afrikaner, freed of the conservatism of tradition (see Image 8.6). Stimela's *Trouble in the Land of Plenty* (1989) album includes a front cover etching of a young African boy in the foreground with smoke and fire in the background, depicting an image of widespread uprising in South Africa and thereby elaborating on the album title (see Image 8.6).

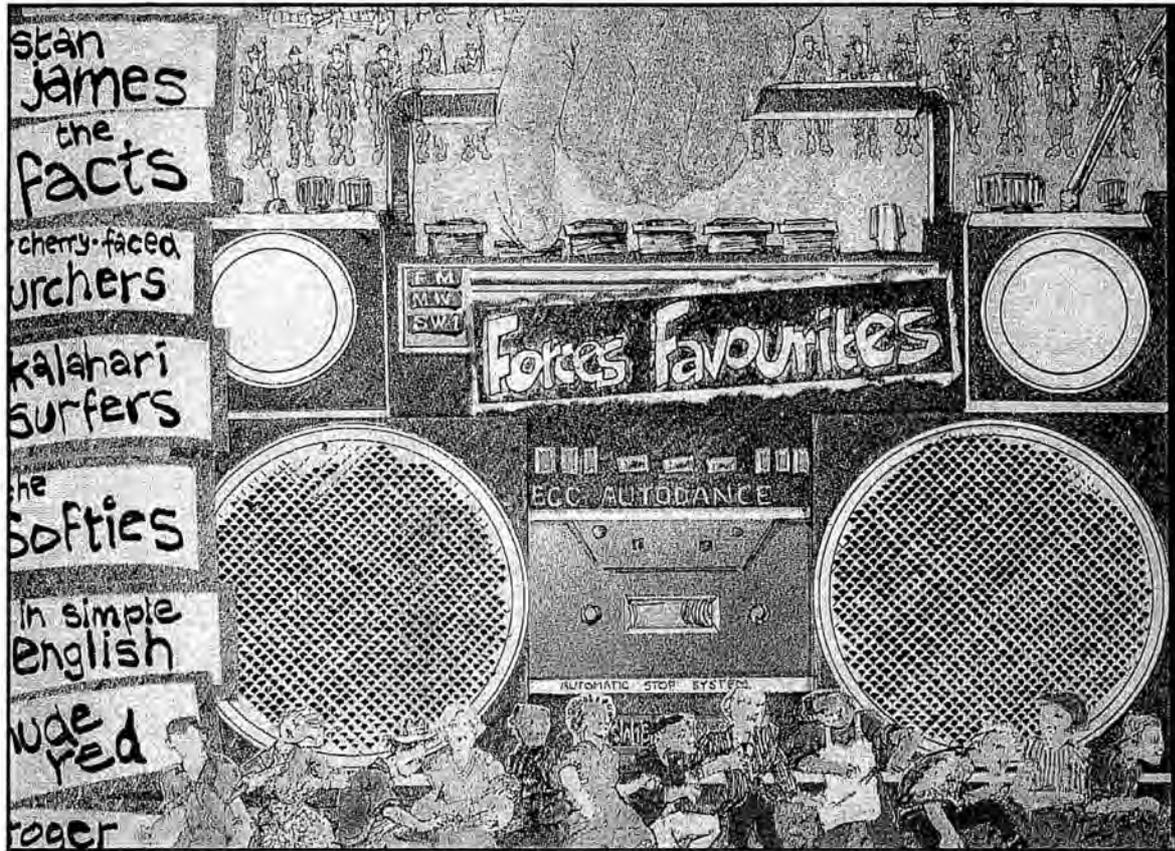


Image 8. 5 Shifty's *Forces Favourites* cover.



Image 8. 6 The front covers of the Voelvy and Stimela's *Trouble in the land of plenty* albums.

The booklet that accompanies the *Living in the Heart of the Beast* (1985) album by the Kalahari Surfers combines two photographs, giving the appearance that the scene depicted is one. The foreground shows a whites-only beach scene, but in the immediate background is the overbearing Voortrekker monument. The monument acts as a symbolic reminder of the pact with God made by the Voortrekkers whereby God gave his approval to the slaughter of Zulus at the battle of Blood River in 1838, in the name of white supremacy. The image suggests that white privilege existed because of the repression that made it possible (see Image 8.7).

Juluka albums covers typically included photographs of Johnny Clegg and Sipho Mchunu together wearing traditional Zulu dress. The images were always of equality and strength. The cover of the *Universal Men* (1979) album is a photograph of Johnny and Sipho posing defiantly on a mine dump, presumably in Johannesburg (see Image 8.8). A cryptic message lay in the representation of the group's name, positioned in the sky.

Richard Pithouse (1999:40) elaborated on the image:

“The name of the band appeared as an engraving on a gold bar. Its shimmering glitz clashed, pointedly, with the more organic colours of the sky, the rocks, the men and their clothes. Juluka means sweat in Zulu and the message couldn't have been clearer: Johannesburg's wealth and glamour is built not just on gold but also on the sweat of the men, the migrant labourers, who mined that gold”.

On Juluka's follow-up album, *African Litany* (1981), Johnny and Sipho are shown in a smiling, friendly pose, Sipho helping to put a bangle on Johnny's arm (see Image 8.8). The back cover comprises a collage of drawings and photographs placed against a wagon wheel, suggesting that all the images depicted are connected to the turning of the wheel. There are images of Zulu warriors, settler soldiers and a boer on a horse, black mineworkers, a black refuse collector, images of urban areas and a white woman lying on a deckchair in the sun. There is also a photograph of a surfer on the Durban beachfront. As with the *Universal men* imagery, the implication was that the prosperous side of South African life was built on the backs of forced black labour. Yet amongst the divergent images there are also pictures of Zulu dancing and music, a reminder that leisure and cultural celebration continue despite apartheid.

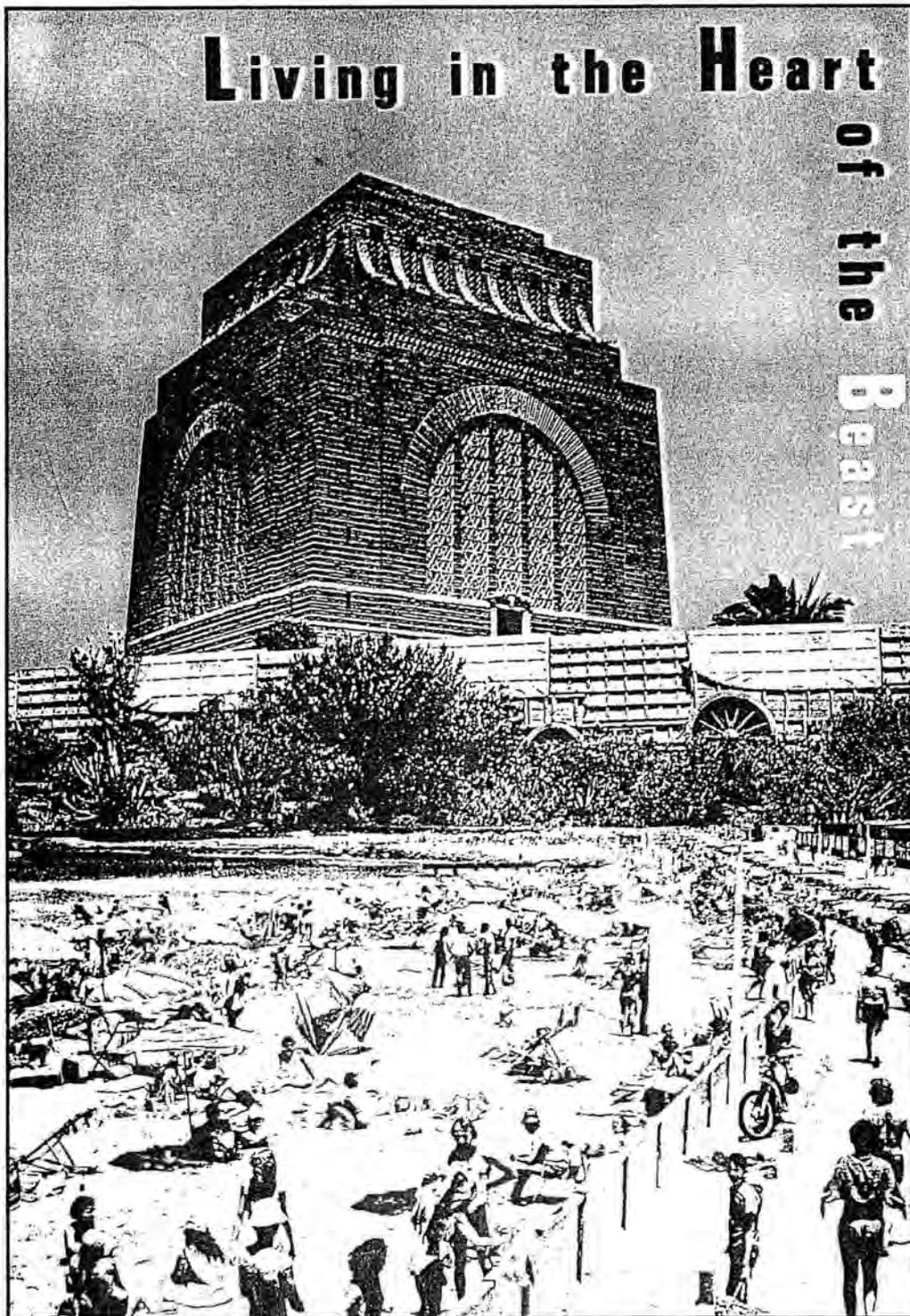


Image 8. 7 Kalahari Surfers' *Living in the Heart of the Beast* booklet cover.

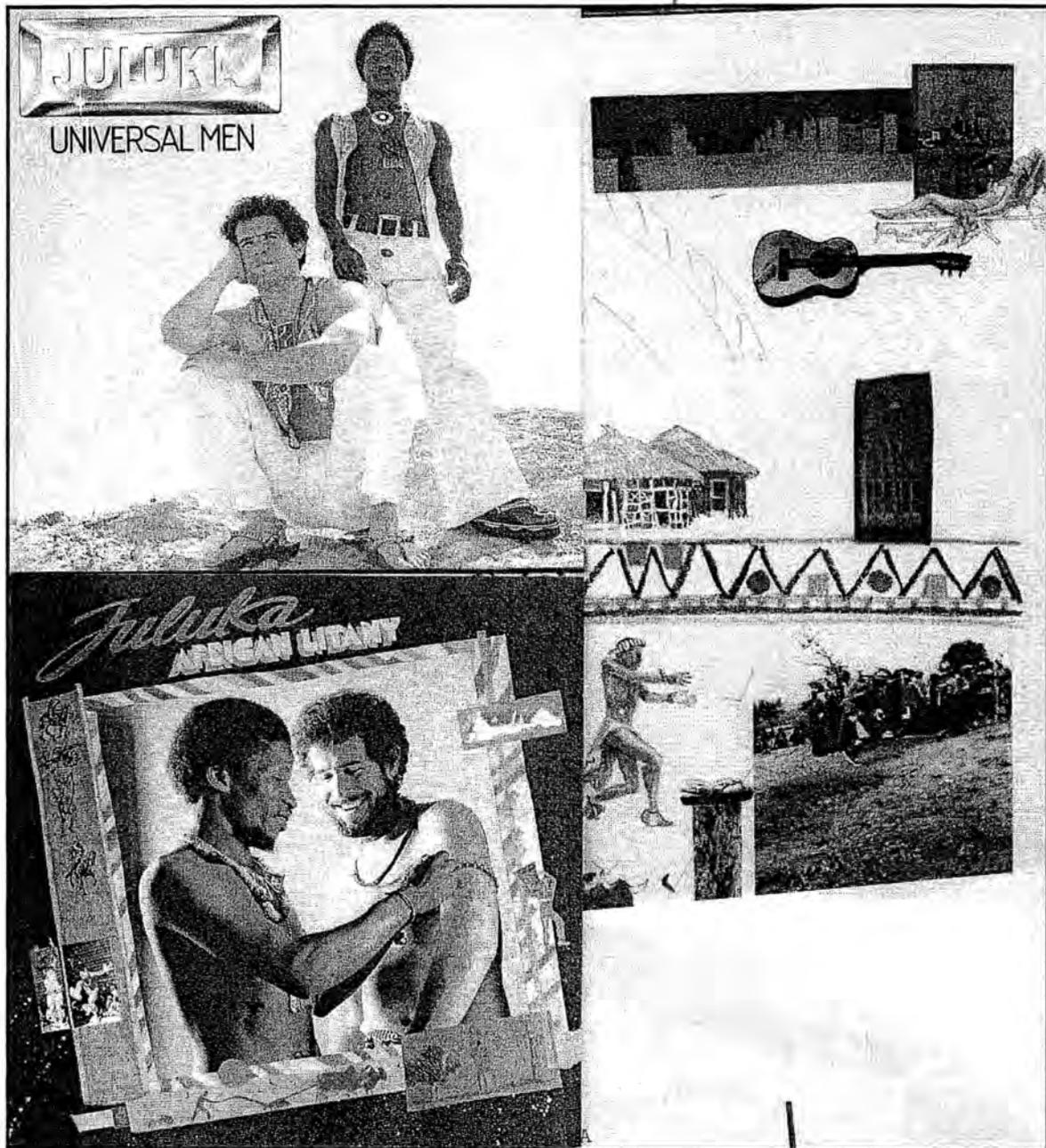


Image 8. 8 Juluka's *Universal Men* and *African Litany* album covers against the backdrop of inner sleeve images from *African litany* (right).

Mzwakhe's Mbuli's *Change is Pain* (1986) album cover reveals a drawing of a casual yet defiant looking Mzwakhe Mbuli standing in front of a squatter shack. 'Change is Pain' is written in graffiti style writing on the squatter shack. An image is provided of the effects of the apartheid system and the need for change, yet the ongoing existence of the

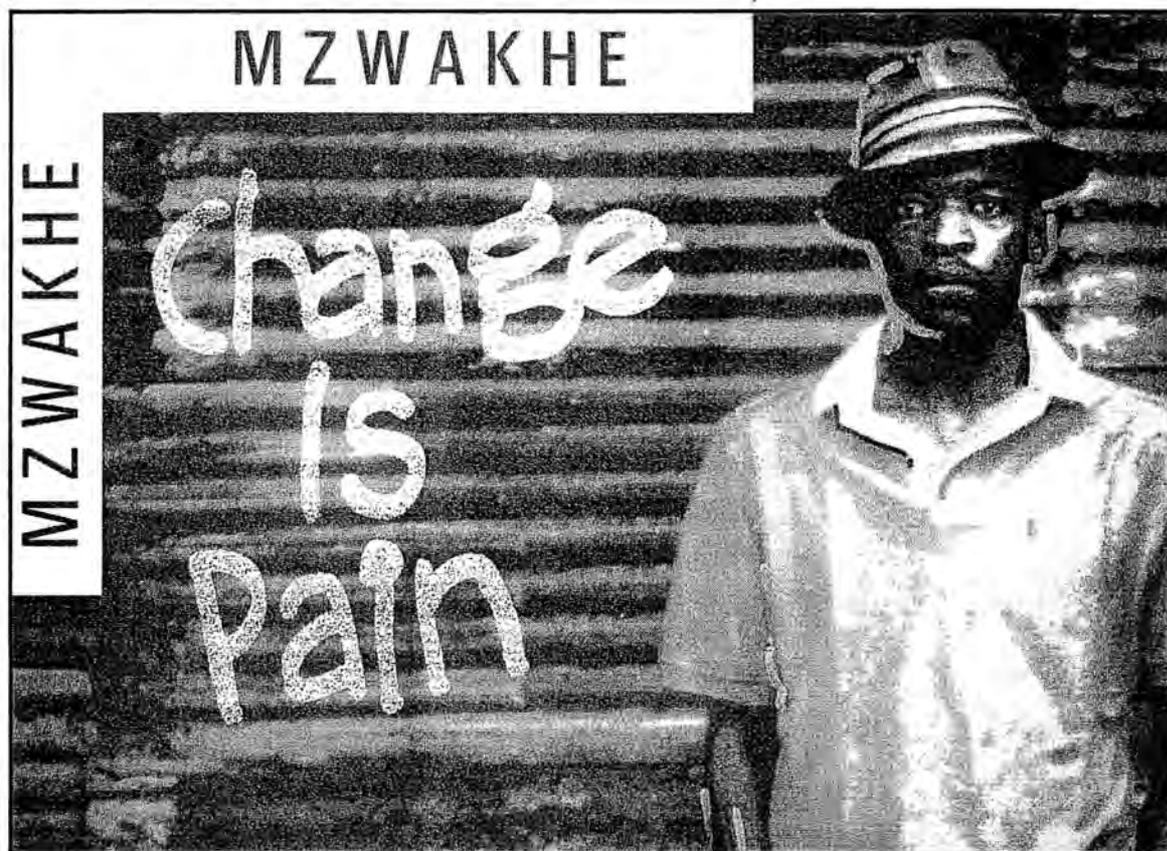


Image 8. 9 Mzwakhe Mbuli's *Change is pain* cover.

squatter shacks and poverty is a reminder, as in the words of the title track, that 'change is unknown in my ghetto' (See image 8.9).

Apart from displaying visual imagery, album covers could also be used to make statements or provide explanatory notes. An example was the export version of *Forces Favourites* (1985) album (which Shifty released in conjunction with the ECC).

Information about the ECC and the injustices of the SADF were included. In a brochure produced to promote the *A Naartjie in our Sosatie* (1985) album, the Kalahari Surfers printed a manifesto of sorts in which they provided background information to "Prayer for Civilization", analysing the role of the chaplain in modern military establishments. One excerpt included the argument that:

"The role of the chaplain in modern military establishments can never be over exaggerated. His constant reinforcement of the political ideology through the word of God is a formidable weapon of indoctrination. Those sane and civilized

prayers before a bizarre military manoeuvre provided the ... mental environment necessary to ensure a teenage soldier's keen and obedient participation" (Sony, 1985).

In this way an ironic alternative reading of the SADF's role in South Africa was provided, as well as a framework within which to understand the song in question. A similar piece of writing (by Ian Kerkhof of the Committee on South African War Resistance in Amsterdam) appears in the booklet that accompanied the Kalahari Surfers' *Living in the Heart of the Beast* (1985) album. It concludes:

"The Kalahari Surfers ... are involved in the process of forging a profound South African national culture. Like the trade unions, war resisters, even church people, indeed all those South Africans actively involved in the struggle against apartheid, the Kalahari Surfers have discovered an identity. This is the subsistence beneath the surface of this Surfers sound".

The Kalahari Surfers' stance was hereby contextualized in a manner not as easily accomplished in the lyrics of songs alone. However, few musicians provided such detailed comment. At the simplest level, some musicians positioned themselves with a short statement about their loyalties. For example, The Spectres included the statement 'Construction Not Conscription' on their *Be-Bop-Pop* (1989) album, and Phil Collins included the statement 'Phil Collins is totally opposed to apartheid' on the South African release of his ... *But seriously* (1989) album (See Image 8.10). Some people within South Africa took these sorts of gestures seriously. Paul Simon was severely criticized precisely for not including similar sentiments on his *Graceland* (1986) album. These examples emphasize that popular music's main commodity – the album – is a complete package that is able to say more about the group than just what the music conveys. The album cover, itself an important art form, proved to be an important vehicle of protest.

Crucially, it was a further means by which musicians could frame their music within a context of censorship, allowing audiences access to political messages not necessarily included in the lyrics of the music. Given that only very overtly controversial album covers were banned (for example, *Bigger Than Jesus* (1989) by the Kalahari Surfers), liberal statements and symbolic images (especially, but not only those) hidden away in

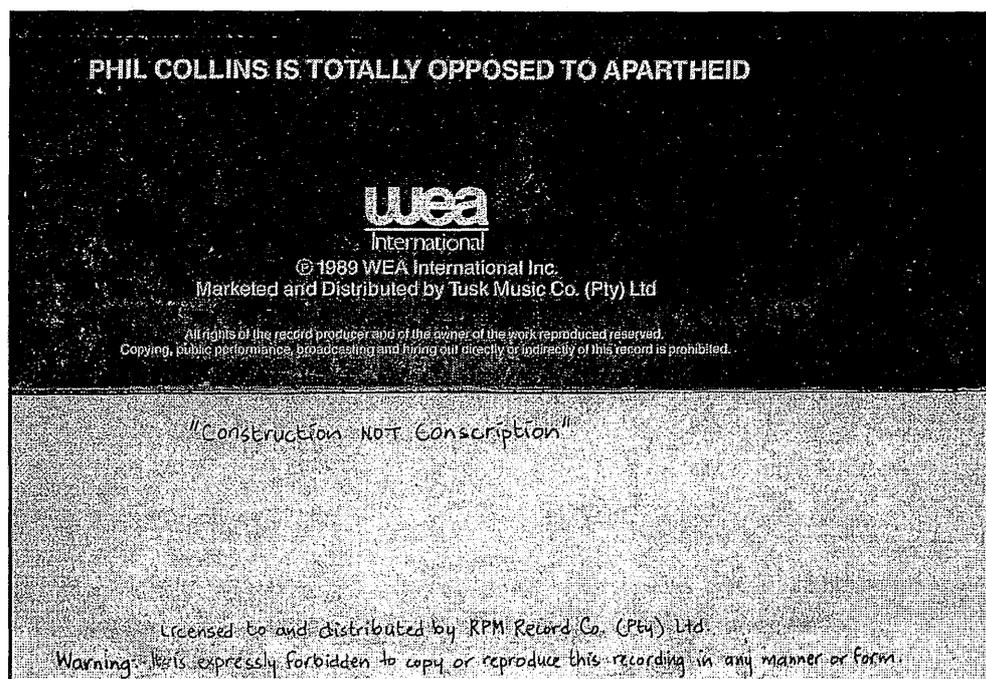


Image 8. 10 Political statements on albums by Phil Collins (above) and The Spectres (below).

inner sleeves and on back covers did not attract much negative attention from censors or the public.

8.4.2 Posters, banners and concert programmes

An integral component of many music performances are posters and flyers advertising concerts, and on many occasions programmes were produced to introduce audiences to details about performances and performers. Banners were also used to provide information to audiences.

During the 1980s posters were regularly used to advertise political rallies in a way that listed the musicians performing along with the name of political organizations or the theme of a particular concert, festival or rally. Examples of posters are numerous. Image 8. 11 includes posters advertising firstly, a 1987 UDF and COSATU concert in support of FAWU (Food and Allied Workers Union) workers, secondly, a 1984 ECC concert (Poster Collective, 1991:165), and thirdly a 1984 cultural day in Alexandra (Posterbook Collective, 1991:162).



Image 8. 11 Posters advertising musical performances in support of cultural, political and economic issues (Poster Collective, 1991: 162-167).

Image 8.12 includes two further examples: a 1985 ECC 'Conscription Clash' (Poster Collective, 1991:167) and a 1985 'Women Make Music' concert hosted by the Wits Women's Movement (Poster Collective, 1991:165). In 1982 Juluka used the same photograph as appeared on their *African Litany* album (see discussion above) for their tour poster. Apart from concert details some (if not all)⁵ of the posters also included, in handwriting, the invitation 'All races welcome'. These posters generally included informative graphics telling the reader about the events: organization logos, symbolic imagery and similar graphics. In this way posters provided information about the concert, yet they also gave the audience an indication of the musicians' allegiances and how, in general, to frame their music. Thus, as was indicated above, an instrumental band like Sabenza or Flux could make a clear political statement without having lyrics in their songs, simply by appearing under a particular banner.

Concert programmes were also used to provide audiences with information about a particular musician or group's allegiances and stance. The programme produced for

⁵ It is not possible to be sure of this, given that only a sample copy of the poster is available as evidence.



Image 8. 12 Posters advertising music concerts at ECC and Women's events (Poster Collective, 1991: 162-167).

Stimela's *The Unfinished Story* national tour of 1987 provided audiences with information which assisted them in grasping the band's political stance, even if some of it was cryptic and needed reading between the lines. For example, group leader, Ray Phiri (1987: 5), contributed a message which included the lines:

What's in a song if there's no message?
 Who's (sic) song is it by the way?
 It's your song – that's why it's unfinished. It's
 The people who will have to finish it.

In addition, in a 'letter from Stimela' in the programme, the group stated:

“The voices will be heard, for the truth has to be told. We owe it to the younger generation: Let’s retain our culture. Today we have gathered to celebrate the coming of age of our music” (Stimela, 1987: 2).

Although not boldly political, these statements effectively framed Stimela’s purpose within the rhetoric of the time, and yet were sufficiently vague so as not to provoke the banning of the programme under Emergency regulations. When Bayete and Sakhile went on their joint ‘Sounds of Africa’ tour in 1989, they included programme notes on the meaning of some of the songs (sung in the vernacular) to be performed. This would have been especially useful to English or Afrikaans members of the audience. For example, the notes explain Bayete’s song “Sol’buyisa” in fairly explicit terms, indicative of the slightly more lenient political climate of 1989:

“We will get our land back! Our land has been taken from us, we will get it back. Our music they can never take from us because it is ours” (Sounds of Africa, 1989: 1).

The programme introduced Bayete in relation to the social content of their music and provides clues to the audiences as to how they should interpret the group’s music:

“The influence of current events is inevitable but Bayete strives to preserve a rich and precious heritage and to make this relevant in format and content to the times in which they live. Their music is an ecstatic expression of suffering and the struggle, but ultimately celebrates life with all its pain and joy. They are subtle in their creativity. They have to hint at things and tread carefully through political minefields. They use allegory with great skill to allude to specific realities and often have to leave questions hanging in the air, knowing that their listeners will understand and provide answers for themselves” (Sounds of Africa, 1989: 2).

Concert programmes were evidently a straightforward means of conveying additional information to audiences, but were time-consuming and often too expensive to produce. Both examples cited above were sponsored by organizations and not funded by the bands themselves.

Most often concerts and gigs were not sufficiently formal or funded to warrant programmes, and so apart from the use of promotional posters, musicians tended to use

banners or political posters on stage to provide a contextual backdrop to performances. For example, the Aeroplanes performed with an ECC 'Forces Favourites' banner behind them together with a 'No apartheid war, troops out of the township' poster pasted on a pillar alongside the stage (see Image 8.13). Mapantsula performed with a large 'ECC,



Image 8. 13 Carnavalesque Aeroplanes gig in support of the ECC (Photograph: Steven Hilton-Barber, mid-1980s).

Stop the call up' banner at the back of the stage (see Image 8.15). And as part of an anti-censorship campaign, Shifty Records offered a subversive alternative to the record company's oft-used inner sleeve logo 'Home taping is killing music and it's illegal' by substituting it with 'Censorship is killing music and it's legal' (see Image 8.14). This was displayed at concerts featuring Shifty musicians during the campaign. Shifty also produced a banner depicting the famous dog and gramophone record made famous by 'His Majesty's Voice'. However, they subverted the logo. In the Shifty parody, the dog wore a muzzle and the wording was changed to 'His Muzzled Voice'. As part of the campaign, Shifty artists, like Johannes Kerkorrel, performed against the backdrop of the

banner. Apart from being humorous, these visual images made an important statement very simply. They also offered the alternate reading that Shifty – as a fringe independent company – did not completely support the sentiments underlying the original big business logo. As Lloyd Ross (1999) commented, “fans of Shifty Records were also fans of home taping”.



Image 8. 14 Shifty's anti-censorship logo juxtaposed with the corporate logo it mimicked.

A final strategy worth noting, and employed by some musicians, was simply to wear a T-shirt with a slogan or image that could be read by the audience. For example, a member of Mapantsula wore a T-shirt that stated that ‘Killing is no solution’ at the same ‘Stop the call up’ gig already mentioned (see Image 8.15). Members of Amandla performed at a concert wearing T-shirts commemorating the ANC’s 75th anniversary. The Thami Mnyete Quartet performed at the CASA Conference wearing T-shirts commemorating the conference. Wearing clothing in this way was an obvious means of presenting the body as a text, to be read by the audience. A less overt form of this was achieved by the



Image 8. 15 Mapantsula at an ECC gig with a 'Killing is no solution' T-shirt and a 'Stop the call up' banner in the background (Photograph: Paul Weinberg, mid-1980s).

likes of Juluka who, as discussed above, wore a style of clothing which made a particular cultural/political statement. Similarly, for a period Koos Kombuis dressed as a Rastafarian, to indicate his acceptance of the political sentiments of reggae music, providing a creolized identity. In a satirical act, Dog Detachment used to wear military uniforms, with little South African flags sewn on the shoulders and stuck on their guitars during live performances. Dog Detachment were part of a group of musicians influenced

by the punk movement and driven by an underlying subversive subcultural theme. Punk was “part youth rebellion, part artistic statement” primarily reflected in music (Sabin, 1999: 2). South African punk-influence was divergent to British punk, with different issues at stake. Terry Armstrong (in Silber, 1983: 42) of Dog Detachment summed this up when he pointed out that “We’re white kids living comfortably in a white suburban society, and we wouldn’t know a dole queue if it fell on our heads”. The subversion within South African punk (which tended not to be hardcore) created a space for white youth to express their dissatisfaction with traditional white (Afrikaner) – dominated politics. But its objection was also to broader economic and political domination, not simply to apartheid politics. Dog Detachment’s seemingly objectionable attire could only be understood within the punk context, which provided a frame within which to understand the broader social significance of their songs. However, a level of ‘subcultural capital’ (Thornton, 1995: 11-14) was required by music fans in order to make appropriate sense of the antics and lyrics of the band.

All these strategies were attempts at creating an identity for the musician that was separate yet linked to the music performed. In the case of slogan T-shirts and button badges, the musician literally wore a link of identification with a specific cause or sentiment. This means of laying claim to a particular identity was part of the music package presented to the audience by the musician. The package itself was a set of indicators allowing the audience an additional level of access to the music. Sometimes this was done to bypass censorship, to say things in a form that could escape the attention of censors. Other times it was simply to show allegiance, to make a statement regardless of the censorial and repressive processes.

8.5 Resistance from within the major record companies

Despite the limitations of the major record companies discussed in Chapter Five, there were individuals working for the majors who opposed censorship and/or apartheid and who were supportive of bands who took a stand against self-censorship. The positioning of these people within the majors was indicative of the contested nature of many areas of South African life during the apartheid era. These were people who had taken the

corporate route but nevertheless, to different degrees, were not prepared to accept the limitations and restrictions of apartheid institutions such as the SABC and Directorate of Publications. A key person in this regard was Benjy Mudie (Interview, 1998) who worked for WEA Records. He pointed out that:

There was a lot of music that had something to say about what was happening in our country at the time. And we did put out a number of records that caused the company problems with the security police, but to their credit they always stood behind what I did.

Mudie alluded to examples such as the National Wake's self-titled debut album (1981) and the Asylum Kids' *Solid Principle* (1982) album. He insisted that he respected the artists' decision and went along with it whatever they decided. Mudie (Interview, 1998) maintained that:

I would have a problem if an artist was prepared to so easily compromise their work, particularly if it's of a social or political nature. I feel uneasy with that, I don't like to censor, and I've never suggested it.

While this sentiment differs from Roger Lucey's recollections of working with Mudie at WEA, there is no doubt that in the early 1980s WEA, and Mudie in particular, did record and/or distribute a substantial amount of music with overt anti-establishment political content that other majors would not have recorded at the time. Roger Lucey, National Wake, Corporal Punishment and the Asylum Kids are clear examples. In this regard Benjy Mudie (Interview, 1998) did feel that WEA was taking a much stronger stand than the other majors. He stressed that:

The South African music industry did stay silent by and large. There were pockets of resistance, you know David Marks [3rd Ear Music, see below], and later what Lloyd Ross [Shifty Records, see below] did, and WEA itself, although it was and became a major label, it always retained that kind of fierce independence. So in the broadest context we were renegades, we were mavericks, and we did play that role – we did question what was going on, we did criticize the industry, we didn't go along with a lot of the decisions that were made, and wherever possible we did

speaking out against what was happening both in a broader sense politically in the country, and within the industry itself.

Roddy Quinn (Interview, 1998) at EMI also claimed that he did not interfere with the music recorded by the musicians he worked with. He said that:

Every artist did what they wanted to do. I was just working with them, although I agreed with everything they were doing. But I certainly wasn't there telling them what to write and that kind of stuff. That was up to them.

Again, this view clashes somewhat with that of Heather Mac of Ella Mental who recorded with Roddy Quinn at EMI. EMI did release music by groups such as Tribe after Tribe and particularly Savuka, who were anti-establishment or politically left. Savuka's "Asimbonanga" (1987) was banned by the SABC in a case that was widely reported at the time. Gallo released Stimela's political albums *Look, Listen and Decide* (1986), *The Unfinished Story* (1987) and *Trouble in the Land of Plenty* (1989) and Sipho Mabuse's politically overt *Chant of the Marching* (1989) album.

Steve Harris of Polygram indicated that Polygram bypassed Directorate of Publications bannings was to distribute the banned album on cassette when the record had specifically been banned (with its particular serial number) or vice-versa (Reitov, 1998d). Despite these pockets of resistance within the majors, it was the independents who offered by far the strongest opposition to the government's policies.

8.6 Innovative independent record company resistance

This discussion of independents focuses only on those which offered a significantly different approach to that of the majors. The three most interesting independents in terms of recording critical South African music were Mountain Records, 3rd Ear Music and Shifty Records – all of which evolved out of the need to record and archive music that would in all likelihood otherwise have been neglected.

8.6 1. Independent repositories of marginal South African music

The first of the aforementioned independents to be established was 3rd Ear Music, started by David Marks in the late 1960s. Marks said that he did not really have the courage to sing overtly political songs in front of audiences. So he set about recording and putting up sound systems. Marks (Interview, 1998) recalls how:

I started recording. I was recording everything I could, and did do. Not only in the folk clubs, but also at the festivals. And then I started working with people at Dorkay House which was another big step for me.... That really established me in the townships as a sound person. And that is how I was known. I was never known as a songwriter or a singer. And from then I started getting involved with the more radical rock groups and the more vocal folk singers. And recording them, because nobody else would or could, and from the sound side of things I started getting more involved in the records.

3rd Ear Music worked with a variety of musicians and put together a host of folk concerts and recordings of these concerts. Some of those who appeared early on included Johnny Clegg and Sipho Mchunu (then still known as Johnny and Sipho), Colin Shamley, Roger Lucey, Syd Kitchen and Flash Harry. Apart from helping to launch many careers, 3rd Ear Music played a crucial role in simply recording hundreds of hours of live music from rock and folk concerts to church and trade union choirs and political rallies.

Mountain Records was established in Cape Town in 1980 by Paddy Lee Thorpe. The aim of the label was to record South African performers (Mountain Records homepage, 2002). According to musician and producer Murray Anderson (Interview, 1998) who worked with Thorpe throughout the 1980s, Thorpe was very determined to do things on his own, and especially not to rely on Johannesburg, where the majors and most independents were concentrated. He wanted to prove that he could do things in Cape Town. Mountain Records was a commercial venture, but Thorpe also took on a lot of projects that were not obvious moneymakers. He put his own money into all the music he recorded, often because he believed that the music deserved to be recorded. Amongst those who were recorded by Mountain were Jonathan Butler, David Kramer, Lesley Rae Dowling, Edi Niederlander and Basil Coetzee. Crucially Mountain provided recording

facilities for Cape Town musicians. Some of these musicians would well have gone unnoticed and unrecorded as a consequence. Some, like Edi Niederlander, recorded overtly anti-apartheid music.

Shifty Records was started in the early 1980s in Johannesburg. Lloyd Ross (Interview, 1998) describes the beginnings of Shifty:

I was playing in bands, there was a whole lot of music going down that was getting neglected by the industry at large, and I thought something should be done about it. I started collecting gear with a friend of mine, Ivan Kadey, and we put a little studio together in a caravan. The idea was of mobility and hence the name Shifty – it could shift from here to there – and we pretty much achieved that. We went and recorded in quite a few locations in South Africa.

Importantly the Shifty approach was to record music neglected by the majors, but which was nevertheless important South African music, that ought to have been preserved. Ross (Interview, 1998) explained how:

My immediate interest was in the new wave scene at that stage – which was in the late '70s – like Corporal Punishment, the Radio Rats (I played with the Radio Rats), National Wake (my original partner in Shifty played with National Wake – Ivan Kadey). For me that was really the kind of music that I wanted to essentially document – I suppose – more than anything else. And once we'd done one or two it started to become evident that documentation wasn't enough, you had to try and sell these things. But as soon as I did start recording, and as soon as I did get some equipment together I started realizing there was a lot more music from a much more diverse spectrum or cross-section of the South African population, that wasn't getting recorded either. So funnily enough, after having started out with this idea of recording hard alternative music, the first record I put out – Shift 1 – was in fact Sankomota, which was a black band from Lesotho. And basically throughout my years recording in the '80s the catalogue just got more and more diverse.

In the 1980s Shifty were pivotal in focusing the direction of much of the resistance music that might otherwise have remained isolated. This was done in the form of three

compilation albums of resistance music at a time when major companies were hesitant to record a single political song on any of their albums. These were the *Forces Favourites* (1985) compilation of songs against conscription and related anti-military themes, *A Naartjie in our Sosatie* (1985) comprising general resistance songs by both black and white performers (against the grain of the dominant practice in South Africa of keeping such music apart for separate audiences) and the *Voëlvry* (1989) album. In these instances Shifty as a company showed a strong commitment by standing up against the system of injustice to which they were opposed. In taking the initiative, they gave direction to individual musical protest efforts despite censorship. In this way musical movements developed, especially the anti-war ECC-related musical movement and (most of all) the Voëlvry movement.

The impact of the independents in archiving music was crucial. They certainly made it possible for a lot more South African music to be heard by a wider audience, but they also played a vital role in ensuring that certain musical reflections on South African life were not lost forever.

8.6.2 Foreign funding, mobile studio and self-production

Shifty Records avoided the commercial necessity of radio play (to pay for recording costs) by seeking sponsorship from overseas donors to cover the cost of the records they produced. While they did (mostly unsuccessfully) attempt to get songs played on SABC, at least the production costs were in most instances paid for through financial aid. This freed Shifty to record many marginal artists and musicians with controversial messages, such as the Kalahari Surfers, Jennifer Ferguson, The Cherry Faced Lurchers and Mzwakhe Mbuli. The drawback of this approach was that Shifty tended to be less innovative with its marketing strategy than many of its musicians would have liked it to be. As a result Shifty made a major and crucial contribution to archiving resistance and other alternative music, but the music was not heard by as big an audience as many had hoped (severe censorship was also an important contributing factor).

Another important innovative Shifty strategy was the use of a mobile studio. As indicated, Shifty operated a studio in a caravan, allowing them to go to various locations

to record musicians. The first – and most famous – case being their trip to Lesotho (an independent country landlocked by South Africa) to record Sankomota who were not allowed into South Africa. The mobile studio was a fluid recording space, capable of being used to move a technological space to places where recording technology did not exist or lacked sophistication (like Lesotho).

In a further innovative strategy, Warrick Sony (1991), who worked with Shifty, bypassed the major pressing plants by releasing his first album on cassettes produced at home and then distributed personally. This was a strategy adopted by a number of people, sometimes for commercial reasons, but often for political reasons. Barry Gilder (1983: 19) released an album of his songs in this manner and it was banned after police found copies of it on a raid of the University of Cape Town student union offices. In similar fashion a distributor operating under the name of 'Observatory Productions' put out a cassette compilation (titled *Regional Jive*) of fringe bands like Illegal Gathering, Splash, Private File and the Outfitters. Postal orders could be made to an address provided on the cassette release. These examples underline Scott Marshall's (1995: 212) emphasis of the importance of cassettes as a small, cheap and easy to use format able to provide an important opportunity for tiny production companies. Indeed, 3rd Ear Music and especially Shifty Records occasionally made use of cassette releases to provide low price album releases to their fans. Cassette technology certainly provided the independents and musicians operating on their own the possibility of bypassing the vinyl pressing plants and getting music out to their audiences relatively cheaply. In this way cassettes could be seen as a challenge to the majors' monopolization of the recording industry (Manuel, 1993), but not in a way that significantly threatened them. For the purposes of this thesis, the importance of cassette releases was that they enabled certain releases that would otherwise not have happened.

Furthermore, Warrick Sony overcame the censorship of the South African pressing plants (who refused to press Kalahari Surfers albums) by recording his albums in Shifty's studio and sending the masters to Recommended Records in England. Recommended Records pressed and released the albums, and Sony imported some of the copies for the

South African market. This allowed him a greater degree of artistic freedom. Sony (Doxa, 1989) explained that:

“I do what I like in my music. I don’t self-censor myself in any way. If I think that this piece of music works like this then I just do it. I don’t think of anything else, apart from maybe if a song in a particular way (form and content-wise) would work musically in a certain way, I would try and mould it into a more tidy package than what it might otherwise have been”.

As a result of Sony’s strategy, Kalahari Surfers albums were overtly subversive and uncompromisingly made counter-hegemonic statements. Sony’s collaboration with Shifty was typical of the innovativeness of the independents (and Shifty in particular) during that period. Musician Gary Hertselman (Interview, 1998) summed-up the vital contribution of the independents:

Essentially musicians were going down, getting their own together without the help of the corporates. No major companies were behind things like the Voëlvry tour. It was an indie like Shifty who understood what was going on. And it was in fact a case of that: that you just actually took the microphone for yourself, rose up and.... the small man rose up and took a slice of the boerewors!⁶

Given the innovative steps taken by these independents, often far more courageous and certainly more innovative than the majors, there is no doubt that they were qualitatively different to the majors in their approach and the way they operated. Shifty’s method of securing funding from foreign donors in particular displayed a resourcefulness (in trying censorship times) not considered by the majors. As a result, the efforts of these three independents alone resulted in a much greater output of overt resistance music than that of any three majors, particularly in a period of intense suppression.

8.7 Resistance from exile

Resistant South African musicians who went into exile often supported counter-hegemonic struggles through various means, including live performance, resistant music and political campaigning. While some musicians went overseas simply to further (the

⁶ Traditional South African sausage.

commercial side of) their musical careers, many musicians went into exile for political reasons, sometimes involuntarily. Miriam Makeba, for example, did not choose to live the life of an exile, but was not allowed back into South Africa after performing in Europe and the U.S.A. in the early 1960s (Makeba with Hall, 1987: 98). Others, such as Letta Mbulu, went into exile because they found the South African political climate too restrictive, stifling their creativity (Molefe and Mzileni, 1997: 45). The Dynamics left South Africa for England because some of the members had been conscripted into the army and refused to serve in the S.A.D.F. The whole band went over rather than disband (Interview with Jimmy Florence, 1998).

Once in exile these musicians were able to voice their political messages more freely than back in South Africa. This usually took the form of political concerts. For example, when Sankomoto were banned from South Africa, Tsepo Tshola (Interview, 1998) left the band and went overseas to perform with Hugh Masekela. He related how:

Here and there we would be invited into political festivals, you know, festivals for Angolans, festivals for South Africans, festivals for different places that had problems.

The Dynamics performed regular gigs in London, often on behalf of political organizations. For example one gig described as a 'Shake off the winter' concert was advertised as an 'Anti-Apartheid Benefit'. Another concert at Chats Palace was supported by the Hackney and Tower Hamlets Anti-Apartheid Movement. The gig was to celebrate Nelson Mandela's birthday (Dynamics, 2001 album CD booklet). In this way they were able to raise awareness about South African issues. The message went beyond the concert venues. On two occasions in 1985 their gigs were reviewed in *New Musical Express*, one of Britain's foremost music magazines (Kelly, 1985; Morgan Jones, 1985). This took their resistant message to a broader audience. One review described their music as:

"an energy of commitment that thumps from the joyful tinpot drums and is etched on the face of the bassist as he tirelessly pogoes from stage front to back. An irresistible mix that moved even the bar-proppers to dance – it's a start. Their parting words: Free Nelson Mandela" (Morgan Jones, 1985).

On a much grander scale musicians such as Hugh Masekela, Abdullah Ibrahim and Jonas Gwangwa regularly participated in resistance initiatives and they often performed on behalf of the ANC and other political organizations, participating in a variety of political campaigns such as the release of Nelson Mandela. The three aforementioned musicians, together with other musicians from within and outside South Africa, participated in the CASA Conference in Amsterdam in 1987. The conference was organized by the ANC as a forum for debating popular culture in a post-apartheid South Africa. The musicians who attended were able to participate in the debate on resistance culture and in particular, the position of music within the cultural struggle (see Campschreur and Divendal, 1989).

Abdullah Ibrahim contributed towards a jazz album of resistance freedom songs entitled *Liberation* (1977). The album involved collaborations between mostly South African musicians in exile and some American jazz musicians. He also was the subject of a documentary film 'A brother with perfect timing' (Austin and Bond, 1986), which portrayed his life as a South African musician in exile, committed to a South African culture of the people, as opposed to apartheid culture.

Of all the South Africans who went into exile, Miriam Makeba was able to use her musicianship most successfully to spread her anti-apartheid message. Makeba campaigned on behalf of black South Africans: within America, at the United Nations (including twice addressing the General Assembly) and in Africa, especially linking up with the Organization of African Unity. She performed many times in different independent African countries. Apart from actively campaigning on various political platforms, she also made use of live performance to address apartheid issues. She achieved this by singing politically relevant songs and, similarly to musicians within South Africa, spoke to audiences between songs. Makeba (Makeba and Hall, 1987: 230) explained how, in exile, she would live for the moments she could perform her music live and:

“for the message, the few heartfelt words that I say to plead for my people, this makes it even more perfect. My voice is heard by the people when I speak about the evils that are strangling South Africa. Every day there is more and more to say

– there is more urgency and more tragedy. The concert stage: This is the one place where I am most at home, where there is no exile ”.

On the concert stages of foreign countries Makeba and others found a space within which to resist, within which to convey a meaningful message through their music. In this moment, in this space, they experienced a moment of creative resistance despite all the structures apartheid had put in their way, and despite the wretchedness of life in exile. The concert stage offered a liberated zone in which they could put aside all else and, for a brief while, perform without compromise.

8.8 Challenging and undermining censors

Musicians and record companies sometimes appealed against Directorate of Publications bans, a practice which attempted to expose secret spaces, where reasons for banning were recorded, but hidden from public access. According to the 1974 Act anyone with a financial interest in a banned publication could apply to the Directorate to be given the reasons for the ban. Musicians and record companies often made use of this clause to expose censorship as “an elite response to a politically threatening situation” (Hill, 1992: 42). Legal challenges reveal that not only is censorship a process in defence of vested political and related moral interests, but it is also that it is based on conservative and often arbitrary and intellectually flimsy premises.

The record company licensed to distribute Pink Floyd’s *The Wall* (1979) in South Africa challenged the ban, questioning the point of banning an album and single which had already sold tens of thousands of copies each and which was not about the South African education system. The response of the Appeal Board emphasized the censors’ paranoia. They argued that the record was “prejudicial to the safety of the State” (Directorate of Publications, 1980: P80/49/80).

Roger Lucey’s challenge of the Directorate ban of his *The Road is Much Longer* (1979) album revealed precisely the weakness and paranoia of the state censor’s case. As a result of the challenge he discovered that some of the factors upon which the ban was based included the belief that the use of saxophones on the album was subversive because: “It is well known that this instrument incites blacks to violence” (Page, 1986: 5) and that the

use of African rhythm in another song was likely to "incite people towards insurgency and violence which can be dangerous for the security of the State" (Directorate of Publications letter to Lucey, 22 October 1982). Not only was the censors' conservative political stance revealed through these statements, but the reasons were once again open to ridicule, especially, as Lucey pointed out in his appeal, the rhythm used in the song in question ("You Only Need Say Nothing") was "a traditional English folk melody", not African (Roger Lucey's letter of appeal to the Directorate of Publications, 28 October, 1982). Lucey went on to point out that in any case, it was fallacious to argue that African rhythms incite people towards insurgency and violence. As a result of Lucey's appeal the original decision to ban the album for possession was reduced to a ban on distribution, thus making it legal to own a copy of the album, but not to sell it.

Shifty Records appealed against the banning of the Kalahari Surfers' *Bigger Than Jesus* (1989) album. In the appeal process the PAB acknowledged that the song "Gutted With Glory" which had been banned (see Chapter Four) was a legitimate form of protest and that "no disrespect is present" (Directorate of Publications, 1989: DP89/05/51). This, in part, led to the ban on the album being lifted.

Even in cases when appeals were not successful, the workings of the public censors were at least exposed. Censors set up boundaries based on a position of moral centrality apparently pursued out of duty. However, scrutiny of the actions of censors instructively debunked the objectivity of the censor, as someone removed from, yet acting on behalf of society, viewing material from an entirely neutral space. The space from which the censors launched their attacks were by no means neutral, but was deeply embedded in the interests of a particular social group with which the censor intrinsically identified.

The central moral space, which the censor claimed to occupy, became an openly political space, part of a contest. Once the subjective and vested status of censors was revealed, those opposed to their actions were able to expose, challenge and ridicule their actions and decisions. This is especially borne-out in a Rand Daily Mail article covering the story of the Directorate's ban of Pink Floyd's *The Wall* (1980). The story was accompanied by a ridiculous photograph of an average Hillbrow man-on-the-street

standing in front of a display of *The Wall* albums, with a bemused look on his face and his fingers in his ears (See Image 8.16). This story and another in the Finance Week (June 5-11 1980) implicitly ridiculed the ban. The Finance Week maintained that the censorship laws were ridiculous, especially banning a record that had been top of the hit parade for three months. The ridicule and laughter, was indicative of a shifting of power,

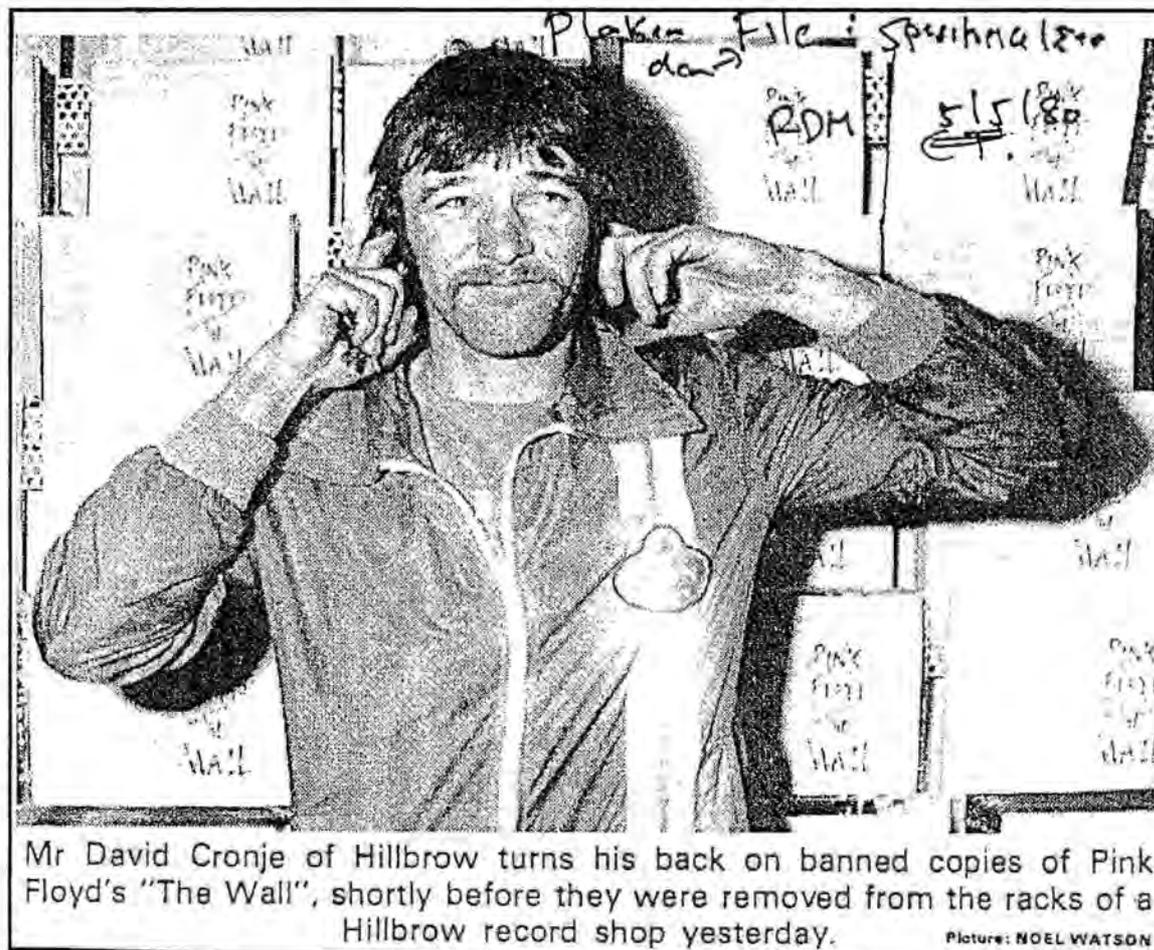


Image 8. 16 A Rand Daily Mail (5 May, 1980) item on the banning of Pink Floyd's *The Wall*.

undermining the moral authority of the centre. Many Directorate decisions, as well as those of the SABC, were met with disbelief, newspaper cartoons and joking amongst critical members of the public. The laughter underlines the precarious position of the censors, whose task was excessive: excessively virtuous, excessively pious and excessively paranoid, leading to a response to publications which itself was excessive:

outlawing publications, but in the process examining and drawing attention to the very objects they wished to banish from public consumption. Excess opens itself to ridicule (Glenn, 1992: 81), and the censor's position was no exception.

In 1979 Dave Marks at 3rd Ear Music utilized a strategy which similarly sought to draw attention to that which the state censor wished to keep hidden from public consumption. Marks sought legal advice about the political songs on Roger Lucey's *The Road is Much Longer* (1979) album. He was informed that some of the songs could lead to serious political repercussions, in particular the song "Lungile Tabalaza". In response Marks pressed two versions of the album. The version for commercial and broadcast release included a censored version of "You only need say nothing" (a verse was omitted) and "Lungile Tabalaza" was left off the album altogether. However, unlike other instances of record company self-censorship, part of the vinyl space allocated for the song was simply left blank. Listeners to the album heard one minute of silence when the record reached the fourth track on the first side of the record. 3rd Ear Music included an explanatory note, which by way of apology explained the blank space on the vinyl. This advisory to listeners, that the album they had purchased had been deprived of some of its content because of political censorship, constituted both an act of self-censorship and one of resistance. It laid bare the stark reality of censorship: that music and ideas had been replaced by silence. But it was a silence not entirely symbolic of defeat. It was a moment of transgressive reflection, literally a minute's silence of resistance, metaphorically acknowledging the death of freedom of speech in South African society.

The 3rd Ear Music blank spaces episode was followed seven years later by a similar example. In a much-publicized wrangle over censorship spaces in mid-1986, the Weekly Mail sought to expose the extent and effects of State of Emergency regulation censorship by revealing exactly where the regulations had prevented them from printing what they wanted to publish. The brazenly self-censored copy of the Weekly Mail on the 20th June 1986 was simultaneously an act of repressive censorship and a moment of resistance. The particular form of the latter was only made possible by the former. The editors, who simply crossed out the 'offensive' words and phrases with a black marking pen, overtly censored all forbidden information (See Image 8.17). In some instances entire stories

were omitted, but the space in which the story would have been printed was left blank, with a note to that effect. In a tit-for-tat response to being ridiculed, the government reacted to the blank spaces by banning them. According to Emergency Regulation 3.3:

“No person shall publish any publication in which any blank space or obliteration or deletion of part of the text or report or of a photograph or part of a photograph appears in that blank space, obliteration or deletion, as may appear from an

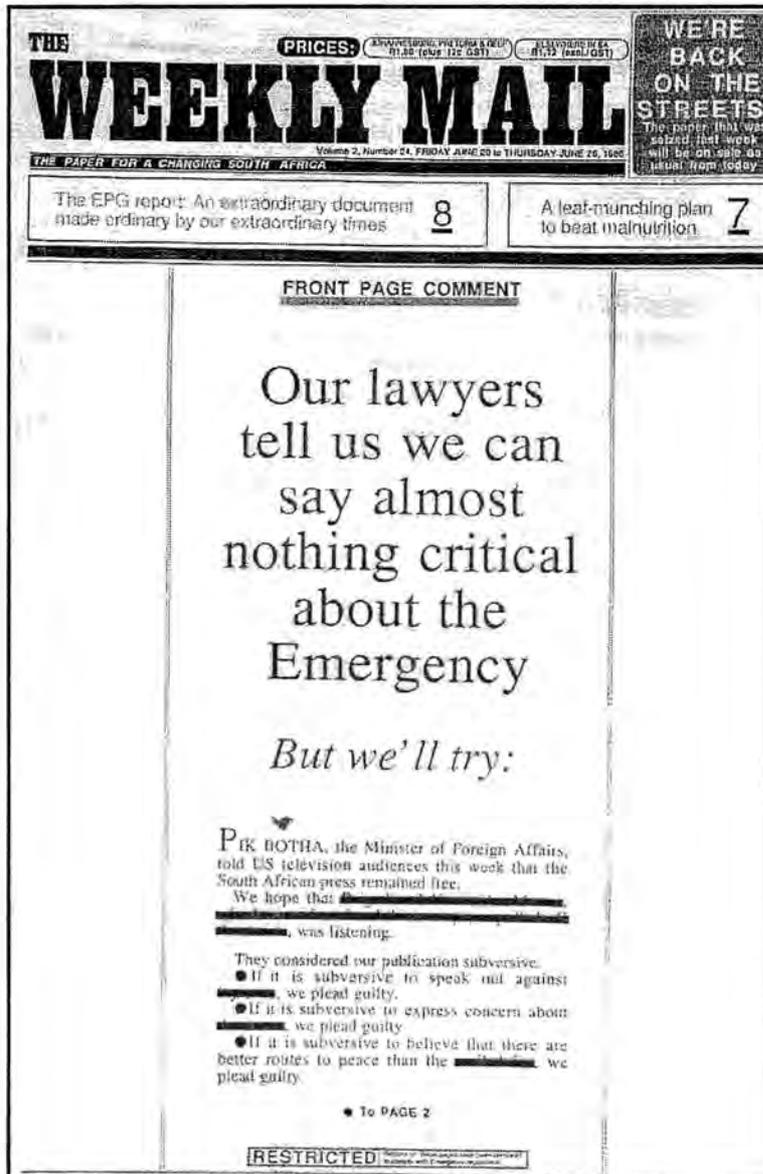


Image 8. 17 The notorious blanked out edition of the Weekly Mail, June 1986.

express statement or a sign or symbol in that publication of from the particular context in which that blank space, obliteration or deletion appears, is intended to be understood as a reference to the effect of a provision of these regulations" (in Manoim, 1996: 64).

In other words, the government wanted to censor the effects of censorship. It did not want the public to know that state and self-censorship was happening, nor the extent to which it was happening. Furthermore, the government recognized that ridicule of censorship and laughter evoked by that ridicule were forms of subversion which undermined attempts at maintaining hegemonic relations. This emphasizes J.M. Coetzee's (1996:13) observation that "the institution of censorship has to surround itself with secondary bans on the infringement of its dignity. From being sour to being laughed at for being sour to banning laughter at what is sour is an all-too-familiar progression in tyranny, one that should give us further cause for caution". Blank spaces were creatively turned around to become spaces of resistance in a spiralling process of innovation and reaction, between the Weekly Mail and the state. Former editor, Irwin Manoim (1996: 74) explained:

"Throughout the four years of the Emergency, the regulations were constantly being changed as lawyers discovered new holes and government bureaucrats scrambled to plug them".

The contest was unrelenting with both sides trying to outmanoeuvre the other with every step. For example, in August 1986 the state conceded that two of the Emergency regulations were invalid, which meant that the censorship strips of the June 20th edition (referred to above) could be peeled-off. The Weekly Mail then proceeded to publish the original stories without the censorship stripes and blank spaces (in the August 22nd edition). Seeking out loopholes in this way, the editors of the Weekly Mail were exploring creative ways of resisting censorship. Indeed, loopholes are creative spaces in themselves; a means to overcoming the censors' defences, saying what one wants to say regardless of prohibitions. The transparent blank spaces reveal censorship, and the exposed act of censorship reveals the censor's fear. These two elements were cleverly woven together by Jennifer Ferguson in "Ashley's Song" (1986):

"And lying in the bath at night
You're sure you can hear someone

Moving up the passage to turn the light off
Open the door
And come and get you
And you don't know any answers
To any questions anymore
The t.v. news is lying
And the newspaper's got big white gaps
And fat black lines
And walking in the streets of Jo'burg
No-one seems friendly anymore"

Ferguson, as musician and reader of the Weekly Mail, was able to continue the spiralling contest between the newspaper and the government, using the blank and blotted-out spaces as metaphors for the government's silencing of truth in the face of growing fear and mistrust. This emphasizes Balliger's (1995: 25) argument that "music and resistance are shaped in the moment of their coming into being, a musical/political praxis that is negotiated by social actors in particular spatial and temporal locations". The song itself formed another loophole exploited in the interests of contesting censorship. The song illustrates the way loopholes are in fact unintended spaces of contest rising directly out of repressive attempts to silence opponents of the dominant discourse.

8. 9 Formal links with political organizations

Finally, resistant musicians made good use of formal political organizations to strengthen their position. In the early 1980s it was difficult for musicians to clearly align themselves with political organizations because of a lack of internal structures. The launch of the UDF in 1983 provided the beginnings of a clearer structure through which musicians could operate. As discussed above, musicians were able to perform on UDF and similar platforms and show their commitment to the anti-apartheid and other causes in different formats. In turn the UDF was able to intervene on decisions regarding the cultural boycott. Johnny Clegg (Interview, 1998) explained the significance of the UDF for politicized musicians:

Before the launch of the UDF it was actually impossible for there to be an internal structure which could monitor and say, 'Look, these bands are not part of a government or state-funded group, they're not promoting the division of South Africa into homelands, and they're just musicians'. The UDF actually became a means whereby we could – by 1986 at least – start to address the boycott and make sense of it, and say 'We are the ones who are being boycotted, we are the ones who are being censored, banned, having our shows stopped. We would like to have a say in how the boycott operates'.

Through the UDF musicians like Clegg were able to tackle issues directly affecting them. However, musicians' interests only became fully addressed with the formation of the South African Musician's Alliance (SAMA) in September 1988. Musicians finally had their own union through which they could channel their efforts and receive guidance. For example, SAMA President, Mara Louw (Interview, 2001), outlined how:

I was involved right from the start, when we formed SAMA. One of the reasons was that artists were getting used in the sense of doing propaganda performances like the Info song. So we had to move in quickly to protect musicians because some people got into serious, serious trouble for participating in that song.

In taking forward musicians' interests SAMA did not affiliate to the UDF. Mara Louw (Interview, 2001) stressed that:

I don't think it's healthy for any union to be affiliated to any particular organization.

SAMA therefore adopted a stance where it avoided affiliation with the UDF but it did support a lot of the UDF's work. In particular it focused its efforts around three basic freedoms central to the work of any musician, these being the freedom of association, the freedom of expression and the freedom of movement. Clegg (Interview, 1998), who was appointed to the position of Vice-President of SAMA, explained that:

If you became a member of the alliance, you had to subscribe to certain positions – political positions. Those three freedoms were critical for the daily livelihood of musicians because they had to move around, they had to be able to sing about what they wanted to sing, and they had to be able to associate with people of other

... races and other ethnic groups to do their work. And so around that we built a political position.

An important consequence of SAMA was that it (along with the UDF) was able to provide clearance for performers wanting to perform overseas. SAMA supported a selective cultural boycott whereby South African musicians with acceptable credentials could perform outside of the country. In addition, SAMA's relationship with formal political organizations provided musicians with a framework through which they could channel their political commitment. Clegg (Interview, 1998) explained that:

If you were a member of the alliance you were considered to be acceptable for overseas performances. But then if you became a member of the alliance, you had to subscribe to certain political positions ... it was accepted by the UDF, that we could be an independent grouping, not an affiliate, but we actually supported a lot of their work.

Although many resistant musicians were opposed to the interference of political bodies with their musical direction and message, most nevertheless appreciated some liaison with political groupings. The issue though, was one of balance. Political independence was an isolating experience, as was the situation for Roger Lucey (Interview, 1998) who, in the pre-UDF days, operated without formal links with political organization:

I was never part of the mainstream political grouping. And when I used to say to people, 'Fuck, you know, I'm getting harassed here, you know there were cops in my house last night' there was a lot of disbelief. People would say 'Oh, you're talking shit'. People actually said that to me. It was like I was trying to get some sort of credibility, like, 'Who is this guy, why does he think that he would warrant this kind of attention?' So it was awkward, and the effect on me at the end of it all was that it shattered my self-confidence. So, from coming from being this very bok [defiant], arrogant and ja, nothing could stop me, I finally just sort of fell apart completely. And that was the effect. So I had no support, I had no support from like the political infrastructure. You know, when it all started happening, nobody came to me and said 'Hell, we know what it's like, and it's awful and we

stand behind you' sort of thing. That was it. I was just like on my own, you know. It was tough.

Lucey, like many other political musicians, wanted to express political sentiments, but was wary of the stultifying effects of political organization on his musical creativity. Jennifer Ferguson (Interview, 1999), who was centrally involved in anti-apartheid and feminist cultural politics in the 1980s, aptly summed up the contradiction:

There came the formation of a Cultural Desk and SAMA. I worked with SAMA. It was very challenging that. I still think politics – and political organizational work – is just numbingly boring. It's just the time that's spent with verbal rhetorizing rubbish and meetings and agh, just so much time was wasted with those things, and so much power play ... Politicians are singularly conservative and totally want guarantees. There's so much calculation, strategizing, lobbying, caucusing, proposaling. It's a comedy – poor comedy at times!

Shifty's Lloyd Ross (Interview, 1998) found formal political activity equally stifling. He was appalled by his brief period of organizational involvement on the UDF cultural desk:

I went through quite a dark phase of my life where I got co-opted onto the cultural desk. And the reason why that happened was because of the music that I was recording. I spent a bit of time wallowing in the mire of cultural politics which I never want to do again.

For musicians who did get organizationally involved because of their political commitment, a struggle ensued, trying to find a balance between the mundanity of politics and their own creative spirit. Lee Edwards (Interview, 1998) of the Cherry Faced Lurchers described the dilemma:

The thing about us was that we didn't fit. We didn't fit with the whole leftie culture that all went to meetings and toyi toyied out of time ... And we didn't buy into it because it was largely this committee-based thing. It was quite counter productive in many ways. So we weren't part of that, but they needed us for their benefit concerts because they didn't have many white bands that were singing the stuff that we were singing, that we were saying. So they needed us but at the same time, we never fitted.

The Cherry Faced Lurchers were committed to change in the country and James Philips was in any case writing political songs. It therefore felt important to the band that, despite their discomfort with formal political involvement, they ought to participate in UDF and related politics. They gave their support to formal political organization when requested, simply playing their music without the baggage of political jargon. However, the difficulty for the band was never really resolved. Edwards (Interview, 1998) recounted how:

We ended up playing a hell of lot of benefit gigs. Which was ultimately to the band's detriment because we weren't making money but we were having to rehearse for them. And we weren't paid by the vast majority of those people, but we played a lot of gigs for ECC, JODAC [Johannesburg Democratic Action Committee] – mostly the ECC, we played some for the UDF. We played all sorts of minor little support gigs for this union and that union and that sort of stuff. Which was quite destroying because often the audiences that we played to at those gigs had never seen us or heard us. Or had no idea who we were. And a lot of people would not react, you know: useless bunch of whities on stage, kind of thing.

The Cherry Faced Lurchers' experience says a lot about the way South African politics permeated even the concert scene, where audiences did not understand and perhaps appreciate bands coming from a different musical and cultural background. The resulting awkwardness is a far cry from the sort of organic intellectualism of protest musicians portrayed by Eyerman and Jamison (1998: 118) who speak of music and movements growing together so that musicians "found a ready audience on the front lines of mass demonstrations".

However, many bands did not experience this difficulty, especially black bands or those white/mixed bands that played a form of crossover music. For Siphos Mabuse (Interview, 1998) the transition to political involvement was much simpler:

Most of my friends had been (politically) involved. Some of them had left the country without me realizing that they had left the country. And I used to meet them when we were outside the country, and then we started practising politics.

And it was a natural progress where I realized these things are happening to me. We are all affected by it, we were all affected by the system internally or externally, so the choice was for us to decide whether we continue pretending that nothing is wrong or play some kind of role in terms of how we can be politically involved. And it was just a natural progression.

When Mabuse linked up with political organization and ultimately made the transition to political music (much later than the likes of the Cherry Faced Lurchers) his new position was embraced by concertgoers. For musicians who found an easy relationship between their music and formal politics, performance on behalf of political movements was a reaffirming activity and opportunity for a supportive audience. This was also true even of the Cherry Faced Lurches' ECC gigs, in front of their own fan base. The subsequent positive experiences for many musicians engaged in live performance on political platforms was clearly described above.

Whatever the difficulties encountered with formal political organization, most resistant musicians benefited from the relationship that existed between music and political organizations. Organizations were able to give musicians meaning and direction to their music, whether by directly singing about resistant issues, or simply playing on political platforms. Some musicians even benefited through being able to play overseas, despite the cultural boycott. SAMA as a political union also attempted to support and guide musicians experiencing difficulties both political and otherwise (for example, contractually). These benefits assisted musicians in their fight against censorship, allowing them to be heard by more people, while also framing their music within a more overt political context.

8.10 Conclusion

During the 1980s many South African musicians wanted to voice ideas which were not approved by various censors. As has been shown in this and the preceding chapter, there were many musicians who nevertheless persevered in singing what they wanted to, framing their music within a context of contest. Crucially musicians sought spaces of resistance despite the structures put in their way in the form of censorship and police

harassment. The creativity in resistance is summed-up by Gary Rathbone who elucidated the position of many (in this instance white) fringe musicians at that time. For Rathbone (Interview, 1998), there was a strong commitment to finding creative spaces within which to resist, in an attempt to:

Try and make people think, create alternative structures, create fanzines, create your own gigs.

The various strategies of resistance discussed in this thesis, when combined, reveal an impressive soundscape of resistance backed by a variety of supporting media messages. Although censorship seriously affected the music context in the 1980s, the effect was not all negative, especially given that censorship did not succeed in silencing counter-hegemonic musical messages. Conversely, musicians played a pivotal role in providing musical messages for many people who opposed the system, messages which the authorities desperately did not want to be heard by South Africans.

The potential for musicians to contribute towards resistance in this way confirms Eyerman and Jamison's (1998: 173) point that, "music can embody a sense of community, a type of experience and identity pointing beyond the walls of the self". Indeed Frith (1996a: 275) stresses that, "music constructs our sense of identity through the experiences it offers the body, time and sociability, experiences which allow us to place ourselves in imaginative cultural narratives". Looking back, the musical constructions of identity were diverse. So many musical moments contributed towards a different way of being, symbolically replacing the restrictions apartheid put in the way: the anti-establishment force that was Voëlvry, the Rasta-inspired drug freedom of National Wake, the urban resistance of the Kalahari Surfers and similar bands, the anti-war stance of the bands that supported the ECC, or the in-your-face opposition of Roger Lucey, Mzwakhe Mbuli, the Asylum Kids and musicians of similar ilk. However, of all these musical moments and others beside, the one which best symbolizes resistance in an age of censorship was Juluka. Music was used to prepare Juluka audiences (through the image of inter-racial collaboration and freedom of association) for a post-apartheid future, questioning the legitimization of apartheid inequality through the demonstration of

an alternative way, which reflected an alluring freedom beyond the confines of apartheid segregation.

This powerful image within Juluka's stance, as well as the other strategies discussed in this chapter, capture the way in which musicians could indeed be heard in many different ways, in the face of a heavy repression and censorship. The concluding chapter ties together all these fragments of resistance to censorship, considering the spaces opened up by musicians in a sonic contest with censors and the discourses they represented.

CHAPTER NINE

Conclusion: Resisting popular music censorship

I am the drum beats of change in Africa
Deafening the ears like the winds of change

^ ("The beat" (1986) – Mzwakhe Mbuli)

9.1 Prelude

In the mid-1980s a group of four Grahamstown-based white women called the Koeksusters regularly performed resistance music in the close harmony vocal style of the Andrew Sisters. They dressed up for their concerts, wearing black outer garments over white shirts and performed at ECC gigs and other political meetings. They were supported by a small group of committed fans, but never recorded an album. The Koeksusters did not leave much of a mark on the political or musical landscape, but for a symbolic act which captures the central argument of this thesis. One of the group's members, Karin Thorne, was detained under the State of Emergency regulations. While she was in detention the full line-up of the group was therefore not able to perform together. As an act of protest the three remaining members got together, dressed in their stage outfits, and posed for a photograph taken by Steve Hilton-Barber (See Image 9.1). The photograph makes use of various 'signifying units' (Barthes, 1977: 23) enabling both the musicians and objects in the photograph to connote defiant meaning. The three musicians are positioned solemnly around a piano holding up Thorpe's outfit on a coat hanger, signifying her absence. What would have been an empty space is filled by a much more poignant signifier of her absence: her uniform, but without her there to wear it.

Even though the group has long since broken-up, Hilton-Barber's photograph remains. It was one of the first photographs on display at the Cutting Grooves Exhibition of the Censorship of Popular Music During Apartheid at the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown in 1999. Peering at the photograph in the basement venue on a cold wintry July day the photograph seemed to be overwhelmingly silent. It lacked movement:



Image 9. 1 The Koeksusters protesting the absence of Karin Thorpe (Photograph: Steve Hilton-Barber, mid-1980's).

the three remaining members of the group pose silently, motionlessly, looking at the lens in defiance. Unlike other photographs at the exhibition, the musical instrument on display is not being played. There is not even any sheet music waiting to be played. There is no anticipation. The scene seems unbearably silent. Yet the silence does not represent defeat. Silence can be subversive when it frees itself from the context of absence, lack, and fear (Minh-ha, 1997: 416). Indeed, for Lie Kuen Tong (in Goehr, 1998: 27) silence should “not be conceived as the mere absence of speech, but rather as its transcendence”. In the photograph the members of the Koeksusters reappropriate the meaning of silence by transcending speech, invoking a representation of absence and silence which is resolutely defiant. And in the defiance is the clue to resistance. The group has inadvertently been censored through the repressive act of the detention of one of its members. She cannot perform publicly whilst detained. But the group has not simply submitted to repression. The remaining members had the foresight to document this moment. Karin Thorpe left a space, but the remaining members of the group creatively reappropriated the repressed space by inserting symbolic significations of defiance. The photograph was to leave

behind a permanent reminder of the government's repression, yet the act of archiving that absence filled that moment, that occasion, with defiance.

The photograph captures a dynamic within broader "social space", an "invisible reality that cannot be shown but which organizes agents' practices and representations" (Bourdieu, 2000: 10). Located within a specific social space, and dependent on particular dispositions (*habitus*), the Koeksusters constructed an antagonistic representation of social space, cleverly entwining conditions of social and physical space, even though that space was constrained. Indeed, Bourdieu (1987: 130) argues that agents "construct their vision of the world. But this construction is carried out under structural constraints". Yet such structural constraints do not rule out resistance. The remaining members of the Koeksusters were able to strategically use structural constraints to expose the very constraints intended to silence them. The space that remains within the photograph was simultaneously one of silencing the group and one that spoke out. The speaking-out-ness of the photograph could not happen without the repressive censorship to begin with.

This intimate link between repression and resistance underlines the contention that where there is oppression there is (at the very least) the potential for a reaction in the form of resistance, in a struggle over the performance of popular music.

The purpose of this chapter is to sum-up the various themes and sub-themes of this thesis, in the process critically reflecting on the knowledge established and the lessons learnt from the approach adopted in researching and writing this thesis. Insofar as artistic and political expression is concerned, censors can be seen to have attempted to occupy the centre, that dominant space of hegemonic control. Censorial practices were meant to push musicians with resistant messages to the margins, and stifle their message as much as possible. Musicians, sometimes in direct response to censorial practices, sometimes out of personal conviction or as an unintended consequence, devised and even stumbled across ways of challenging the dominant discourse, in an attempt to get their music and their message heard. This chapter reflects on the way that struggle has been documented and analysed in this thesis, particularly indicating that censorship practices were constantly contested.

9.2 Reviewing the theoretical framework used in this thesis

At the outset it was stated that the aim of this thesis is to document, contextualize and analyse all known forms of censorship and as many instances of resistance to that censorship as have been discovered during the period of research. The intention was to provide an historical account of the censorship of popular music in 1980s South Africa informed by selected reference to concepts deployed by Gramsci (hegemony and counter-hegemony), Foucault (the multiplicity of resistance) and Bourdieu (habitus and fields). In making use of relevant concepts by these and other theorists in a 'multiperspectival' approach (Kellner, 1995b: 98), it is important to take into account a qualifying point made by Bourdieu. In considering the use of his concepts, Bourdieu has insisted that they are historically contingent and have, in his work, been deployed strategically. Bourdieu has always used his concepts as "tools of investigation" and they should in turn, "only be used pragmatically by others in full knowledge of the complexity of conceptual transfer and not replicated routinely" (Robbins, 2000: xxiii). My approach to the works of the aforementioned and other theorists has indeed been to avoid routine replication. As noted in Chapter Two, and as is borne out by evidence provided throughout this thesis, the 1980s South African context differed from that of the western democratic societies which form the focus of the work of Foucault and Bourdieu (in particular). Issues such as lack of democracy, the related excessive reliance on coercion and mass refusal of the dominant discourse are amongst the most important differences. For these reasons in particular, it has been necessary to apply theoretical concepts cautiously, influenced by the analysis of postcolonial writers such as Said and Fanon who cautioned against an extreme decentering of the subject, given that in colonial contexts a dominant state does exercise power in the interests of a minority. However, a more nuanced theory of resistance has been posited, one which views resistance in a more dispersed manner than conceived by Gramsci (see discussion below).

9.2.1 A context of hegemonic struggle

In the period covered by this thesis, there is no doubt that struggles existed not only around domination in the form of the Nationalist government's apartheid policy, but around one of its regulatory practices, that of censorship. Although in the struggles

around popular music censorship there was “no binary and all-encompassing opposition between rulers and the ruled at the root of power relations” (Foucault, 1976: 94) and “no single locus of great Refusal” (Foucault, 1976: 97-98), there was nevertheless a struggle between those wanting to silence some musical messages and those who did not want to be silenced. Clearly, as has been shown, the apartheid state (involving a combination of coercive and manipulative institutions) was the central censor within apartheid South Africa and it was against the state, in one form or another, that those opposing censorship generally resisted.

An approach based on Gramsci’s concept of hegemony seemed the most appropriate to capture this struggle, given that “Gramsci’s notion of hegemony incorporates the cultural and political terrain within which dominant and dominated encounter each other” (Reddy, 2000: 3). Such an approach emphasises the manner in which the apartheid state sought to regulate popular music and other popular cultural forms in an attempt to maintain its political/moral/religious hegemony, and that it colluded with non-governmental bodies in order to do so. However, resistance to popular music censorship was far more dispersed than a direct application of Gramsci’s model of counter-hegemony allows. For this reason Foucault’s (1976: 92) conception of power as a multiplicity of force relations has been assumed within a neo-Gramscian reworking of hegemony, so that one can speak of “various social hegemonies” (Foucault, 1976: 93), comprising competing groups within the ruling alliance. For example, as revealed in Chapter Four, even in terms of official government-sanctioned censorship practice, acts of censorship were not confined to a centralized state operating autonomously, nor was control located solely in the offices of the Directorate of Publications and the Publications Appeal Board. The support of various non-government bodies was central to the operation of formal state censors. Specific instances of censorship were therefore sometimes the product of separate ‘force relations’, each with its own structures “forming a chain or a system” (Foucault, 1976: 92). The relationship between these force relations did not always result in cooperative chains, but also on occasion led to “disjunctions and contradictions which isolate(d) them from one another” (Foucault, 1976: 92). Examples of such contradictions include the struggles between the incumbents of official state censorship positions and the South African Police or those occasions when religious groups were unsuccessful in their

censorship requests. Disjunctions and struggles within the central state institutions themselves, as well as between institutions within the dominant alliance(s) illustrate the need for the neo-Gramscian theoretical approach adopted in contextualizing hegemony during the period considered in this thesis.

The need to move beyond a direct application of a Gramscian approach to hegemony also seemed necessary in conceptualizing struggles against censorship. As clearly revealed, opposition to censorship was not undertaken by a homogenous resistant group united by a single cause. Rather, struggles around popular music censorship supported Foucault's (1976: 96) idea that:

“there is a plurality of resistances, each of them a special case: resistances that are possible, necessary, improbable; others that are spontaneous, savage, solitary, concerted, rampant or violent; still others that are quick to compromise, interested or sacrificial”.

It is important to remember that the apartheid state, by forming strategic alliances in its multi-faceted (moral-political-religious-economic) struggle to maintain its hegemony founded on capitalism, racism and Calvinism, by necessity had to use censorship processes to silence *all* messages that fell outside of the dominant discourse. It was not only popular music with an anti-apartheid message that was censored but other music too. Given that the apartheid state sought to legitimize its hegemony on Christian grounds, it was necessary that the state be seen to uphold Christian values through state censorship. Censorship therefore affected not only anti-apartheid songs by musicians such as Peter Tosh, Roger Lucey and Mzwakhe Mbuli, but sometimes frivolous songs with sexual connotations and references like Donna Summer's "Love to love you baby" (1975) and Celi Bee and the Buzzy Bunch's "Superman" (1977), songs about drug usage such as Peter Tosh's "Legalize it" (1977) and songs which offended Christian sentiments such as Chris De Burgh's "Spanish Train" (1976) and the Kalahari Surfers' "Bigger Than Jesus" (1989). The effect of this multi-pronged and broad approach to state censorship was two-fold. Firstly, it broadened and multiplied the points of application of the state's censorship practices by increasing the number of censorable issues to include ones not usually considered to be political, and secondly, it inadvertently involved (and on occasion mobilized) musicians (and their audiences) who had neither been directly

involved in the anti-apartheid struggle, nor who had written anti-apartheid songs. Examples of South African musicians who fit this bill were the Radio Rats, Flash Harry, the Asylum Kids, Neil Solomon and Hawk.

The state's efforts to form a hegemonic bloc of strategic alliances caused it to assume the position of chief censor, thus setting itself up as the central target of attack of those opposing the censorship of their music, regardless of the subject of that censorship. In exploring the way in which the state situated itself as chief censor, Bourdieu's concept of fields (and its relation to habitus) was employed. Much of Bourdieu's work on culture has focused on the artistic and commercial values attached to cultural products, and his discussion of habitus and fields is regularly applied to ways in which products develop a symbolic value. Individuals' ability to appreciate the symbolic value of products (individuals' taste) results in social distinctions (status). Bourdieu (1984) views judgements of taste as an ongoing struggle for classification engaged between classes. As noted in Chapter One, the struggle is one of converting economic capital into symbolic capital, "disguised under a veil of moral relations" (Bourdieu, 1990: 290). Importantly, taste is not simply the result of economic conditions, but of political struggle.

Although this thesis is not immediately concerned with issues of taste on an aesthetic level, Bourdieu's arguments about taste have been usefully applied to censorship processes. As noted in Chapter One, Street (1997) has previously applied Bourdieu's work on taste to the area of censorship. Accordingly, censorship is seen as political judgement, a product of a hegemonic process, given that censorship influences the political landscape, supporting hegemonic interests and attempting to marginalize others. In Chapter Four the extent to which the state, along with moral and religious institutions, set the boundaries of a publication field were clearly revealed. The state's involvement was clearly not on an aesthetic level. Rather, through political judgement it decided what was 'undesirable' and what was not. As revealed in Chapter Five, the state's power to censor permeated the entire publication field so that even record companies and musicians themselves practiced censorship of controversial messages in the face of repressive and economic repercussions.

For opponents of censorship, state censorship institutions became targets of attack, and as has been clearly shown in this thesis, the reasons for resisting censorship were

divergent. The actions and messages of various musicians demonstrate that very few of them fit clearly into a complicit or resistance position, if a UDF-informed people's culture position (as outlined in Chapter Six) is to be used. Mzwakhe Mbuli is one of the few examples of a musician who seemed to put forward – in all of his songs – a people's culture position. Almost all musicians did sing about love, personal aspirations and problems. And most of these musicians did sometimes sing controversial or protest songs and/or took part in some form of resistance or other. Discussion in Chapter Seven revealed several examples to support this contention. To consider just a few: Flash Harry mostly wrote satirical songs about love and relationships, yet they included a torn up R10 note on their record sleeve simply because it was against the law to reproduce national currency and to show their scorn for a national symbol of wealth. Musicians Robbie Robb and Richard Ellis personally disliked the South African police and would taunt the police at live events simply because their presence irked them. Many white musicians performed songs in opposition to the system of two years compulsory military conscription, and there were those who sang feminist songs (sometimes with a lesbian theme) or who included drug and sexual references and swear words in their songs. There were also those who sang overt political songs that directly opposed the apartheid system. Clearly, instances of resistance to censorship emanated from a diversity of South African musicians many of whom had no political or other ties to other musicians. Even those who were politically motivated were often unconnected to others. For example, Roger Lucey who sang hard-hitting lyrics but was not part of any political grouping.

It is evident therefore that musicians often positioned and repositioned themselves in order to create spaces of resistance within which to express their opposition to censorship practices. In such circumstances, Berndt Ostendorf (2000: 233) suggests that “popular music impinges powerfully on politics; it creates social spaces – in Johannes Fabian's words, ‘Moments of freedom’ – in which a sense of selfhood and community may flourish”. The repositioning enables the musician to adopt a resistant stance which, at least momentarily, links the musician to a broader movement of resistance and constitutes an instance of counter-hegemony.

These instances of counter-hegemony are more than mere self-satisfying moments of transgression, even when performed in seemingly disconnected and fragmented ways by

individuals not directly connected to a broader formal political movement. Elizabeth Wilson (1993: 113) maintains that transgressive acts typically cannot deal with the structural nature of oppressive institutions. She argues that while such acts might be personally liberating it is uncertain that they can contribute towards a change in those structures. She concludes: "We can rage against the fading of the light, we can shake our fists at society or piss on it, but that is all" (Wilson, 1993: 113). However, Kellner's (1995b: 97) use of a neo-Gramscian framework allows him to provide an important warning against the danger of fetishizing difference. From Kellner's perspective, those South African musicians in the 1980s who battled against censorship shared "common forces of oppression, common strategies of exclusion ... (and) common enemies and targets of attacks" (Kellner, 1995b: 97). It follows that it is important to stress:

"commonalities as well as differences and insist on the articulation of how representations of such things as race, gender and class are intertwined and function as vehicles for ideologies of domination which naturalize, legitimate, or mask social inequalities, injustice and oppression".

Kellner's sentiments are directly relevant to the rationale of the masking that occurs in the censorship process. Musicians were confronted with the same maze of censorship obstacles and moments of resistance, no matter how fragmented they were on an individual or organizational level. They were nevertheless framed within a broad political context which, by way of the collective effort of musicians, connected the fragments, forming a sort of resistance *mélange*. This was not a fixed, homogenous group of resisters, but a fluid, constantly changing kaleidoscope of individuals, sometimes drawn together, often not, sometimes consciously, often not. Indeed the manner in which these individuals can be seen to have resisted censorship was truly variegated. Depending on context and the particular angle of perspective, those involved, how they related to each other, the issues they addressed and how they tackled them, constantly changed. However, censorship remained the target of attack. Each instance of counter-hegemony had the effect of undermining censorship and aspects of what it represented. The fragmented but nevertheless oft-occurring moments of opposition niggled away at the censorship process, ensuring that throughout the 1980s spaces were discovered which enabled the South African population to hear music that in some way or another

challenged the dominant discourse, despite censorship practices intended to rule out such messages. For musician Syd Kitchen (Interview, 1998) spaces of resistance could be exploited as a means of:

finding a way to break the constraints. Maybe I just see things in a kind of neo-Marxist way, in the way I believe that people have choices. People can react back, people can make it different.

Indeed, the refusal to bow to censorship pressure formed part of the pressure to gradually relax censorship controls during the 1980s (importantly, this process needs to be seen within the broader context of resistance to the apartheid system more generally).

Resistance to censorship was certainly not simply a personally liberating transgressive act of pissing on oppressive structures or, in James Ant's case, puking on the censors (see Image 9.2). At times, and in isolation, this might have been the case, but the overall impact had far more widespread liberating consequences.

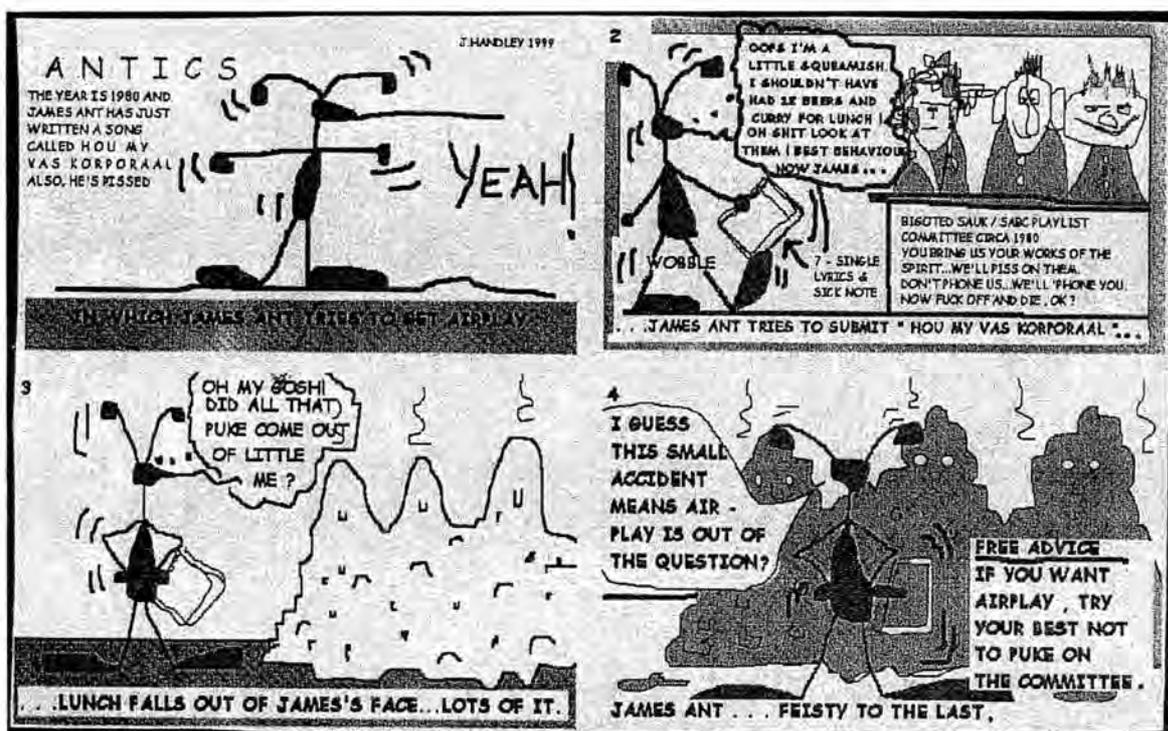


Image 9.2 Jonathan Handley's (1999) 'Antics': James Ant has a run-in with the SABC censorship committee.

The image of the kaleidoscope also captures the huge potential for creativity, the myriad of ways in which each musician was able to formulate instances of resistance (glimpses of which were provided in Chapters Seven and Eight). Through combining personal creativity with more general concerns, musicians found spaces of resistance characterized by “shifting and multi-layered interaction between spatial organization, expression and use” (Crowley and Reid, 2002: 4). Loopholes in censorship laws and other exploitable gaps within the socio-musical landscape were fashioned by musicians in their attempts to express themselves musically. The tension between structure and resistance here brings into play Bourdieu’s concept of habitus, according to which it can be seen that musicians’ acts of resistance were “generated by the encounter between opportunities or constraints presented by situations and the durable dispositions that reflect the socialization of past experiences, traditions, and habits¹ that individuals bring to situations” (Swartz, 1997: 290). Hence the way they reacted, the form of creativity and the extent of politicization, varied according to a combination of musicians’ personal and social histories (their habitus) and the social spaces which they occupied at a particular time.

9.2.2 Creative resistance out of repressive structures

Very often these moments of counter-hegemony were integrally related to the repressive nature of the dominant discourse, in whatever way it affected certain musicians. This ranged from direct censorship of music to more widespread feelings of oppression, the effects of living in an abnormal society. The Aeroplanes jested that there could be no normal music in an abnormal society, as an explanation for the quality of their music, but there was a deeper truth to this remark. Group member, Carl Bekker (Interview, 1998) revealed how the environment of the apartheid system itself gave rise to the resistant musical performance in the first place:

We didn’t have a thing about just playing songs, we were specifically reacting to an intense boredom and dreariness in South African society. You know, staying at home, you couldn’t watch TV – there’d be a picture of PW Botha getting the

¹ This is not to confuse ‘habitus’ with ‘habit’. However, for Bourdieu (1971: 192-3) habits do form part of the habitus. Indeed habits constitute a “cultural unconscious ... which may govern and regulate mental processes without being consciously apprehended and controlled”. Bourdieu uses the word ‘habit’ within

freedom of some town and watching a military parade. We were reacting against a very restricting cultural set-up. So there was a lot of useful anger about the kind of culture that apartheid had created, and we were actually attacking that.

Although the existence of repressive structures in no way guarantees resistance in this or any other form, Bekker's contextualization of the Aeroplane's resistance music underlines a recurring theme within the South African popular music landscape during the apartheid era. Very often modes of resistance rose from a sterile and repressive terrain created by the very apartheid structures designed to stifle such resistance. Chris Stanley (1997: 39) likens this to a 'regulatory implosion' which gives rise to "the production of unexpected and random configurations of counter-powers and counter-spaces. The metaphor of refusal suggests that that which is refused may also refuse". This is true of many of the examples discussed in Chapters Seven and Eight. Some of these are worth reconsidering in the light of this discussion of creative resistance.

The very existence of 3rd Ear Music, Mountain Records and (especially) Shifty Records was based on censorship in the first place. Shifty was a reaction to censorship, to the fact that there was relevant alternative and/or resistance music being performed live which was not being recorded and archived. Hence the effects of government pressure on record companies not to record contentious music turned out to be not only constraining but enabling too. The threat of government censorship inadvertently gave rise to the most influential and prolific politically and stylistically alternative independent label. Indeed the very names of Third Ear and Shifty suggest the opening of creative spaces of resistance. Third Ear suggests a repositioning of the focus of one's listening, perhaps listening between the lines, with a perceptive inner ear. Shifty, as has been noted, developed its name out of the mobile nature of its caravan studio, an ability to shift from one space to another. In the case of Sankomota, the studio shifted from the prohibited space of South Africa to the group's own independent space in Lesotho.

The Voëlvry tour too, partly grew out of the state's censorship practices. Faced with an inability to realise radio play for their controversial anti-establishment songs, the Voëlvry musicians took to the road in an attempt to reach audiences who they could not reach in

his discussion of 'habitus', for example when he considers the habitus constituting categories which exist "in the form of habits governing consciousness" (Bourdieu, 1971: 181).

any other way. In this way censorship structures can be seen to have inadvertently given rise to innovative ways of being heard, and thus resistance arose out of the very structures intended to thwart such attempts at protest.

9.3 Reflections on theory and methodology

It has been argued that a theoretical framework incorporating a neo-Gramscian approach informed by important insights from Foucault and Bourdieu (as outlined above) has allowed for a nuanced exploration of the complexities of South African popular music censorship. As argued in Chapter Two, approaches to censorship during the apartheid era which have situated a single struggle in narrow binary terms provided an oversimplification of the political, economic and cultural terrain. The official state censors' collaboration with and reliance on non-governmental bodies in the censorship process and the struggles over censorship decisions within and between central state institutions are two such instances already considered in this concluding discussion. The fragmented nature of those resisting state-centred censorship practices has also been discussed here.

A further (and crucial) example of the need to explore the nuances of censorship struggles are the debates surrounding the cultural and other boycott calls by anti-apartheid and other liberal groups. In simple binary terms the cultural boycott was viewed as a positive strategy used to deprive white South Africans of normal cultural relations while apartheid was upheld. By focusing on the mechanisms of the cultural boycott (rather than simply considering the ends which the boycott was meant to realise) it became clear that the boycott strategy constituted a form of censorship, and that, like apartheid state censorship, it formed a structure which restricted musicians' ability to be heard, even if their message was one of resistance to apartheid.

Jim McGuigan (1992: 203) has argued that absolute freedom of expression is ultimately a principle of intolerance, allowing for hate speech (and other speech advocating forms of oppression) to go unchecked. For this reason certain forms of censorship are necessary, lest we slip into a completely amoral universe. This was certainly the argument made by many of the advocates of the boycott strategy. Nevertheless, the purpose of this thesis was to analyse all areas of music censorship, exploring the complexities involved. It would therefore be problematic to simply accept the necessity of the boycott strategy

because it was utilized in opposition to a system of oppression. As revealed in Chapter Six, the effects of the boycott on South African musicians, including those who were opposed to apartheid, appeared to be counter-productive, especially when it led to despondency amongst musicians and made it difficult to them to earn a living from their music. When considered in conjunction with some of the contradictions of the boycott strategy (for example, how it benefited many overseas musicians who took no stand against apartheid) it becomes clear that the boycott might well have been an undesirable form of censorship, the aims of which could more effectively have been realised through alternative means.

Utilizing different aspects of the works of the theorists referred to in this thesis has opened the way for an understanding of the complex censorship practices considered. In a sense this practice follows Kellner's (1995b: 98) 'multiperspectival' approach to cultural studies. Kellner draws on Nietzsche's perspectivism, according to which we should "employ a variety of perspectives and interpretations in the service of knowledge" (Nietzsche in Kellner, 1995b: 98). This allows us to overcome one-sided and narrow interpretations. However, in adopting such an approach, one should stop short of attempting to fuse incompatible methodological strategies. While it is believed that the attempt to combine the different concepts used in this thesis has led to an open-minded approach which has certainly debunked some of the binary-induced conceptions of cultural struggle referred to (see Chapters Two, Four and Six), the extent to which these approaches in themselves have been explored is limited. The purpose of this thesis was to make a significant and original contribution to knowledge through in-depth research leading to a detailed socio-historical reconstruction of the censorship of the popular music terrain in the 1980s. The theoretical approach used as a context for this account of censorship does not constitute a new theory of music censorship in South Africa or elsewhere. A deeper analysis of the theoretical underpinnings of this thesis could form a future area of study.

A further limitation of this thesis is a lack of musicological analysis of the popular music examples considered. While an attempt has been made to briefly refer to the music itself where this has been particularly important (a number of such considerations are provided in Chapter Seven in particular), there is undoubtedly a need for more detailed

musicological analysis of attempts to bypass and overcome the censorship of popular music considered in this study.

Probably the most significant aspect of this thesis is the detailed triangulation which informed the writing of the socio-historical account provided. Although articles on South African popular music censorship had previously been published, information contained within these was not always very detailed nor was it completely reliable. The field of study abounds with many misconceptions and misrepresentations which needed clarification. It was therefore essential that in the research process as many sources as possible be explored and, as outlined in Chapter Three, a careful and critical process of triangulation be practised. This included corroborating information provided in the extensive interviews conducted with people connected to the censorship of popular music process.

In avoiding a purely structuralist approach to the research topic, the research aimed to uncover not just the procedures, strategies and measures adopted by those interviewed, but also the understanding and perception (in general the *experience*) of those involved in the research process, so as to gain an understanding of the meanings which they attached to the terrain of popular music censorship in South Africa. As explained in Chapter Three, the interviewees have been quoted in their own words, often at length, in order to add textural depth to the evidence, capturing the stories of those involved in their own (albeit selected) words. The account provided thus makes effective use of direct speech as “a powerful way to express experiences, aspirations, disappointments, frustrations, joy, grief – ideas and emotions” (Coetzee, 2003: 7). Not only has the use of extensive quotes facilitated the process of exploring the perceptions of interviewees, but it has also given the interviewees the opportunity for their voices, in a sense, to be heard. This is particularly important given the censorship process to which many of the interviewees were subjected.

On the surface it might appear that the interviewees have been quoted in an uncritical manner, but such an impression would be mistaken. As noted in Chapter Three, all information cited as evidence in this thesis has undergone a process of corroboration in accordance with a process of triangulation. For the most part, this process of corroboration has taken place prior to the writing-up stage, and has not been included in

the thesis. It would have been laborious, time-consuming and disruptive to constantly explain the corroboration process every time evidence was provided or an interviewee quoted. On occasion when an interviewee's version of an event contradicted others and both versions have been cited, I have pointed to the contrasting evidence in an attempt to critically engage with the issue under discussion. Examples of this are found in Chapter Four when state censors' professed liberal values were interrogated, in Chapter Seven when Ralf Rabie seriously questioned Anton Goosen's contention that he disguised protest within his songs, and in Chapter Eight when musicians and their major record company representatives differed on the majors' commitment to controversial music.

In sum, this thesis was undertaken in an attempt to explore an important area of South African history. In the process of exploring this history I encountered many musicians who spent time providing information to me, out of a commitment to this project of writing up a history and for their own personal reasons. In completing this thesis I may not always have presented the interviewees as they would have liked me to, but I believe that the account provided is an accurate one, which captures not only events and processes, but also a sense of the people affected by the processes involved in the censorship of South African popular music during the 1980s.

9.4 Finale: a conclusion within a conclusion

The discussion of popular music censorship covered in this thesis has been framed within a context of struggles over hegemony. Despite censorship structures aimed at silencing messages which fell outside the ambit of the dominant discourse, musicians sought spaces within which they could be heard. Songs incorporating satire, symbolism and camouflage made use of the space between literal meaning and the reading between the lines, a space simultaneously seen and unseen. Seen, only if one adjusted one's sights (and had the cultural capital to do so). In live performance, some musicians sought liberatory spaces, where resistant or alternative performance could take place. Sometimes musicians resisted censorship overtly, in dangerous spaces, addressing the authorities in a confrontational manner. Mzwakhe Mbuli for example, dodged the police between performances, appearing and performing unannounced before slipping away into hiding. Other musicians (Juluka in particular), explored what Lipsitz (1994) referred to as

“dangerous crossroads” – spaces where, according to the official, dominant discourse, dangerous influences met, where ‘undesirable’ elements combined, as in multiracial audiences and bands. A few musicians left South Africa to resist from foreign spaces, where they experienced a freedom not available to them in South Africa but which often came at the cost of personal sacrifice.

These spaces of resistance to censorship were possible because of the very censorship structures which attempted to blot out resistant voices. This thesis has drawn attention to the continuous contest which took place around censorship structures, between those using censorship to protect the dominant discourse and those who, for whatever reason, wanted to express themselves in ways not permissible within the dominant framework. Yet these counter-hegemonic voices persisted, finding ways of being heard, so as to put forward alternative representations of South African life to the narrow and oppressive structures the censors attempted to uphold.

Each of these instances of counter-hegemony – each song, each poster, each performance – represented the refusal of musicians to relinquish a desire for a freer society. Their contributions were important on a number of levels. Firstly, by refusing to be silenced, resistant musicians reclaimed a public space in which their music could be heard. In these spaces musicians devised “means of expression” in a process of “identity negotiation” in which the music acted “as a space to comprehend the self” (Miles, 1997: 76-77). This was particularly important for black South Africans, who faced relentless attempts by the apartheid state to deny them an identity outside of the undignified and oppressive dominant discourse. This is why Thomas Cushman (1995: 9) stressed that in the South African context “music was instrumental in helping blacks to share their common experience of subordination and to carve an autonomous cultural space in which they could redress their grievances”. In order to carve that cultural space it was crucial to find ways of bypassing censorship to get music and messages heard by South African audiences.

Cushman’s insight points to the second area of importance in the refusal to remain silent. The personal is interlinked with the political, so that the importance of finding spaces for one’s own voice had broader social-political implications. For Eyerman and Jamison (1998: 173) this means that music can embody a “sense of community, a type of

experience and identity pointing beyond the walls of the self'. Eyerman and Jamison (1998: 173) acknowledge that the sense of community might be imagined, but it nevertheless impacts on identity and therefore is able to have lasting impacts on individuals and communities. While the focus of this thesis has been more directly on the struggle against censorship itself, the significance of music as exemplary action must not be ignored. For Eyerman and Jamison (1998: 172) this means that music was capable of "communicating a vision of what the world could be like to others". This certainly came through, not only in the lyrical and musical messages, but in the very act of contesting censorship and the dominant discourse it represented.

Finally, musicians' refusal to be subjected to the pressures of censorship has left behind a valuable legacy which reflects people's lived experiences during the apartheid era. Certainly, there were an array of songs which reflected the dominant discourse, but importantly musicians who opposed censorship in whatever manner left behind different images of South Africans contesting the inequalities to which they were subjected. They have also left behind visions of the society they hoped would one day follow apartheid. The efforts of the many musicians and others involved in the contest against censorship of music reflects Fanon's idea that the state of emergency imposed by the dominant culture "becomes the state of emergence of new identities whose project and mission is interrogative of being, place, and time" (discussed in Amkpa, 2000: 120). Spho Mabuse very effectively captured this vision when, in 1989, he wrote "Chant" including the lines:

Someday when it's part of our history
Children will learn from our past
Someday when we tell our story
Children will learn from our past

The struggles of the 1980s are indeed part of South Africa's history. The many songs covered in this thesis and many others besides, together with many other instances of counter-hegemony adopted by those who resisted censorship, survive in individual memories and, to a marginal extent, in collective memory. The songs remain, but the structures which attempted to silence them have been overcome. As Andre Brink (cited in Coetzee, 1996: 205) foresaw: "In the struggle between authority and artist it is always the artist, in the end, who wins. Because his (sic) voice continues to speak long after the members of the relevant government ... have been laid to rest". The challenge, if there is

to be one, is to continue to fight attempts to prevent marginal voices from being heard, so that musicians will not have to, once again, devise ways of contesting censorship in the future.

APPENDIX ONE: LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Allingham, Rob	Gallo House, Rosebank, Johannesburg, 17 April 1998.
Amos, Larry	Melville, Johannesburg, 14 September 1998.
Anderson, Murray	Central Cape Town, 17 July 1998.
Berelowitz, Keith	Fellside, Johannesburg, 15 April 1998.
Bekker, Carl	Yeoville, Johannesburg, 16 April 1998.
Botha, Piet	Pretoria North, Pretoria, 11 September 1998.
Clegg, Johnny	Parktown, Johannesburg, 20 April 1998.
Cloud, Neil	Norwood, Johannesburg, 10 September 1998.
Coakley, Alistair	Bryanston, Johannesburg, 19 April 1998.
Coetzee, Braam	Hermanus, 14 July 1998.
Darlington, Andy	St George's Mall, Cape Town, 17 July 1998.
De Wet, Danny	Braamfontein, Johannesburg, 15 April 1998.
Edwards, Lee	Bezuidenhout Valley, Johannesburg, 14 September 1998.
Ellis, Richard	Morningside, Durban, 13 March 1999.
Erasmus, Paul	George, Friday 10 August 2001.
Esterhuizen, Tinus	Auckland Park, Johannesburg, 9 September 1998.
Fassie, Brenda	Berea, Johannesburg, 14 September 1998.
Ferguson, Jennifer	Jeppe, Johannesburg, 8 April 1999.
Florence, Jimmy	Rondebosch East, Cape Town, 16 July 1998.
Fox, Tom	New Market Junction, Cape Town, 20 July 1998.
Frohling, Rudi	Parktown North, Johannesburg, 17 April 1998.
Gordon, Steve	Central Cape Town, 29 January 2002.
Goosen, Anton	Melville, Johannesburg, 14 September 1998.
Gumede, Siphon	BAT Centre, Durban, 18 September 1998.
Handley, Jonathan	Klerksdorp, 18 April 1998.
Haslop, Richard	Berea, Durban, 14 March 1999.
Herbst, Ingi	Bedfordview, Johannesburg, 14 September 1998.
Herholdt, Sonja	Randburg, Johannesburg, 28 August 2001.
Hertselman, Gary	Bezuidenhout Valley, Johannesburg, 14 April 1998.
Kekana, Steve	Turfloop, Pietersburg, 16 September 1998.

Kerkorrel, Johannes Northcliff, Johannesburg, 10 September 1998.

Khanyile, Jabu Newtown, Johannesburg, 27 August 2001.

Kitchen, Syd Umbilo, Durban, 17 September 1998.

Kombuis, Koos Gordon's Bay, 21 July 1998.
Additional personal correspondence, 8 June 2001.

Kramer, David Camps Bay, Cape Town, 20 July 1998.
Additional personal correspondence, 6 June 2001.

Kunene, Madala BAT Centre, Durban, 18 September 1998.

Laxton, Julian Windsor Park, Johannesburg, 6 April 1998.

Louw, Mara Four Ways, Johannesburg, 29 August 2001.

Louw, Steve Greenpoint, Cape Town, 20 July 1998.

Lucey, Roger Mowbray, Cape Town, 16 July 1998.
Additional personal correspondence, 14 March 2000.

Mabuse, Siphon Newtown, Johannesburg, 15 September 1998.

Mac, Heather Woodstock, Cape Town, 17 July 1998.

MacKenzie, Mac Central Cape Town, 31 January 2002.

Marcus, Fuzzy Melville, Johannesburg, 14 September 1998.

Marx, David Berea, Durban, 17 September 1998.

Masonda, David Downtown Studios, central Johannesburg, 14 September 1998.

Maswanganya, Mike Steeldale, Johannesburg, 15 January 1999.

Mbuli, Mzwakhe Open-ended postal questionnaire, October 1998.

McCully, Tully Central Cape Town, 20 July 1998.

McLennan, Rob Bryanston, Johannesburg, 16 April 1998.

Möller, Willem Bezuidenhout Valley, Johannesburg, 15 April 1998.

Mudie, Benjy Sandown, Johannesburg, 10 September 1998.

Ngwenya, Moses Downtown Studios, central Johannesburg, 14 September 1998.

Niederlander, Edi Claremont, Cape Town, 17 July 1998.

Neswiswi, Golden Telephonic interview, 10 February 2003.

Oldfield, Wendy Four Ways, Johannesburg, 13 April and Norwood, Johannesburg,
14 April 1998.

Parr, Tim Randburg, Johannesburg, 19 April 1998.

APPENDIX TWO

Brief biographies of interviewees and South African musicians quoted in this thesis

Allingham, Rob Archivist at Gallo (Africa) Records, a music historian and producer of re-issue compilations. He is widely regarded for his knowledge of many aspects of South African music history and has written contributions on South Africa for the Rough Guide series.

Amos, Larry Top South African blues guitarist. First received acclaim with blues-rock band Baxtop who released the notable *Work it Out* (1979) album with WEA Records. Single "Jo Bangles" (1979) received airplay on SABC and sold relatively well. The band broke up in 1980. Thereafter Amos gave up music for three years (went into the building trade) before getting back into music. He performed with various blues bands he put together including the Larry Amos Blues Project and Larry Amos and the Naughty Boys. Recorded an album with Bruce Williams (of Baxtop) with BMG, but it was never released because of contractual disagreements. Did a lot of gigging on the Johannesburg circuit throughout the rest of the 1980s, but did not record again.

Anderson, Murray Keyboard player and producer. Played keyboards in Robin Auld's band Z Aulaire which was formed in 1984. Auld had a short but successful career in South Africa in terms of radio play and live performance, but went overseas in 1986. In the meantime Anderson worked with Paddy Thorpe at Mountain Records and appears on many Mountain releases during the 80s, playing keyboards where needed. He now owns Milestone Studios in Cape Town.

Berelowitz, Keith Stage name Keith Berel. Songwriter, vocalist, lead guitarist, sax and flute for Flash Harry and Carte Blanche. Berel formed Flash Harry in Johannesburg in 1978. The band released two pop-rock albums, *Going Straight* (1981) and *Take What You Can* (1982). Received substantial airplay on Radio 5 with "Shame on You" (1982) but the single did not sell very well. They broke up in 1983. Berel formed Carte Blanche in 1986. Released the album *Far Cry* (1986) with Priority Records. Single "Killer in the Crowd" (1986) was banned by SABC. Berelowitz's main job is dentistry, and music increasingly became sidelined. He did not release anything after Carte Blanche.

Bekker, Carl Artist and musician (singer, songwriter and guitarist). He formed the Aeroplanes with friends who had nothing better to do and who wanted to create music that was politically different to the mainstream. Although the group members never took themselves very seriously, they developed a cult following and wrote songs which captured the spirit of the time. The band recorded one (self-titled) album with Shifty Records in 1986 and regularly played at Jameson's, festivals and private parties in Johannesburg.

Botha, Piet Singer-songwriter and guitarist who played on the Pretoria rock scene in the 1980s with the band Jack Hammer. Has flirted with the alternative Afrikaans music scene in the 1990s. He is the son of Nationalist Government Foreign Minister, Pik Botha.

He has also released music as a solo artist.

Clegg, Johnny Started out as a musician playing with boyhood friend Sipho Mchunu in the 1970s. They formed Juluka which combined Zulu and Anglo-American folk-rock music. The band built up a strong following amongst both black and white audiences in South Africa. Their exploration of Zulu culture was a trademark of the band. They released seven studio albums. In 1985 Mchunu left the group to return to his farm. Clegg brought out a solo album before forming Savuka. The new band was more international in its sound and appearance. Savuka topped the charts in France and Clegg became known as the White Zulu. Savuka were lyrically more politically overt than Juluka. Clegg became very involved in cultural politics in South Africa and was instrumental in the formation of SAMA. After four studio albums Savuka broke up and Clegg and Mchunu reformed Juluka in 1997.

Cloud, Neil Drummer with highly successful apolitical Rabbitt, who were South Africa's most popular and commercially successful white band of the mid to late 70s. When the band broke up Cloud attempted an unsuccessful solo career before going to the United States where he played in Peter Frampton's band, but soon returned to South Africa and took up a career in retail. Rabbitt's lead singer and songwriter Trevor Rabin went on to join Yes and also pursued a successful solo career in the United States.

Coakley, Alistair Lead guitarist for top South African white band Hotline, who began as a rock band with their debut album *Burnout* in 1981. Fronted by lead singer PJ Powers who become extremely popular amongst black South Africans when the band crossed-over to a township-pop/rock sound with albums like *Music for Africa* (1983), *Jabalani* (1984) and *Wozani* (1985). The band even managed to play in the United Kingdom, Italy, Holland, Germany and the United States but the cultural boycott prevented them from releasing music there. The band broke up in 1987. Coakley continued to play guitar in PJ Powers' backing band after she pursued a successful solo career which continues today. Coakley now produces and plays on many albums as a very accomplished guitarist, whether rock, pop or township styles.

Coetzee, Braam Appointed to the position of Director of Publications on the Directorate of Publications in early 1981. He had an academic background and was appointed in an attempt to 'liberalize' the Directorate, which had an extremely conservative reputation based on its over zealous censorship practices in the 1970s. He served as Director of Publications throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s. He has since retired.

Darlington, Andy Promoter and marketer who promoted various South African musicians including David Kramer, Brenda Fassie, Steve Kekana, Leslie Rae Dowling and Wendy Oldfield. He initially worked in the area of International Label Management for EMI before moving into an Artist and Repertoire position. He subsequently established Andy Darlington Promotions and, in the mid-80s, spent six years at Capital Radio in the position of Music Supervisor and Promotions Manager, liaising with local record companies and (in conjunction with Capital disc jockeys) compiling play-lists and the weekly Top 40.

De Wet, Danny Original eVoid drummer (when they were still Void) but left before the band made their first album. Later re-joined the band as a stand in drummer for a 1983 tour. Joined Petit Cheval after a break in England. With the break-up of Petit Cheval he joined the Electric Petals in the late 1980s and into the 90s became the drummer for Wonderboom.

Edwards, Lee Bass guitarist for the Cherry Face Lurchers. Long-time friend of James Phillips who he met while at Rhodes University in 1980. They formed the Cherry Faced Lurchers shortly afterwards in Johannesburg. After the death of Phillips in the mid-1990s he dropped out of music and concentrated full-time on his job in sound recording in the film industry.

Ellis, Richard Songwriter, lead vocalist and percussionist (timbales, congas, cabasa, vibraslap, cowbells, tambourine). A Durban-based musician and founder member of The Usuals who formed in 1980 and released the album *Law of the Jungle* in 1982. The band broke up in 1983 and Ellis put together a succession of fringe bands who played on the Durban circuit, and which were very involved in the ECC scene during the 1980s.

Erasmus, Paul Security branch policeman for 16 years from 1977 until 1993. Throughout the 1980s he was based in Johannesburg performing covert acts on behalf of the South African Police. He was periodically assigned to perform surveillance duties on South African musicians including Roger Lucey and Juluka. He is the only former South African policeman to openly admit to harassing musicians, in particular Roger Lucey.

Esterhuizen, Tinus Head of SABC Springbok Radio Record Library. His position was initially that of Chief Compiler: Springbok Radio, but he changed to Music Manager: Commercial services. Whatever his title, he was in charge of play-listing not only for Springbok Radio but for the SABC as a whole. He worked in this capacity from the mid-1970s until Springbok Radio closed down in 1985. Thereafter he has worked on various radio stations at the SABC and is presently working for Radio Sonder Grense (Radio without borders).

Fassie, Brenda Started out as a replacement member of Joy in 1980 before forming bubblegum band Brenda and the Big Dudes in 1984. The band proved a successful platform for her singing ability. Their single "Weekend Special" (1984) sold over 200 000 copies and even entered the billboard black singles chart. In 1987 Fassie embarked on a solo career, establishing herself as one of South Africa's most popular female vocalists. Her most successful single was "Too Late for Mama" (1989). Her first political song of note was "Black President" (1989), banned on SABC.

Ferguson, Jennifer Singer and pianist who started out as a theatre and cabaret artist, working with Barney Simon at the Market Theatre. She was centrally involved in anti apartheid and feminist politics. Her talent as a singer-songwriter led to a successful career as a musician beginning in the mid-1980s. She recorded two solo albums with Shifty Records: *Hand Around the Heart* (1986) and *Untimely* (1989). In the 1990s she became an ANC member of Parliament. She found the world of politics too restrictive.

Ferguson remains marginally involved in the formal music scene.

Florence, Jimmy Keyboard player and songwriter. Founder member of the Dynamics, a multi-racial ska-township band which formed in Johannesburg in 1983. Featured Winston Nyaunda on alto sax and Steve Howells on drums. In 1983 the band released a cassette album entitled *It's the Dynamics*, followed in 1984 by the successful *Switch it On and Wind it Up* mini LP. Some of the white members of the band were called-up to the defence force in 1984 and so the band decided to relocate to England. They played numerous gigs in London, including many anti-apartheid related gigs. Winston returned to South Africa in 1984 and the following year the band broke up. Some of the original members reformed the band in 1993 and played infrequently, eventually releasing a further album in 1996, but broke up again shortly afterwards. Also see Harvey Roberts (below).

Fox, Tom Highly-rated guitarist, songwriter and sometimes vocalist for popular South African white African rock band Bright Blue. The band formed in 1983 and released their self-titled debut album in 1984. The single "Window on the World" (1984) was very popular, as was their anthemic "Weeping" released in 1987, widely regarded as one of South Africa's best ever pop songs. The band occasionally records new material with long breaks in between. Tom Fox was part of another Cape Town band called The Usual which formed in the mid-1990s. He mostly works as a producer in Cape Town.

Frohling, Rudi Charismatic lead vocalist for late 70s rock band the Rag Dolls, who changed their name to Leatherette in 1981 because of contractual problems. Frohling left South Africa for Germany when Leatherette broke up in 1981. He formed the group Ten Drummers Drumming who had a fair amount of success and released several albums. A stroke brought Frohling's career to a premature end.

Gordon, Steve Cape-Town based journalist and political activist with a strong interest in cultural politics, especially music. A strong supporter of the cultural boycott, he played a prominent role in upholding the boycott in the Western Cape. Amongst the publications he wrote for were the Cape Times and Vula magazine.

Goosen, Anton Successful Afrikaans singer-songwriter who began by writing songs for other musicians, particularly Sonja Herholdt (see below). Broke onto the performance scene in his own right in 1979 with his *Boy van die Suburbs* album. Strongly influenced by Bob Dylan, he wanted to establish himself as a protest singer but never progressed beyond vaguely symbolic protest songs. He continues to release albums on the fringes of the alternative Afrikaans music scene.

Gumede, Siph Very influential South African musician. Bass player and songwriter and more recently a vocalist. Started off playing in a band in Durban in 1968. Went up to Johannesburg in the early 70s where he made a living as a fringe musician until 1975 when he formed Spirits Rejoice. Recorded the album *African Spaces* in 1976 and *Spirit's Rejoice* in 1980, including the hit "Shine on" (1980). Gumede left to form Sakhile in 1981. Sakhile played a stronger form of African jazz than did Spirit's Rejoice. They

aligned themselves with the political left and released a number of albums in the 1980s. When the band broke up Gumedede pursued a solo career in the 1990s and beyond.

Handley, Jonathan Song writer and guitarist with various bands including the Radio Rats, the Chauffeurs and the Pop Guns. Together with close friend, James Phillips, he put Springs on the South African music map (although the two were never members of the same band). The only one of Handley's bands to receive public recognition and radio play were the Radio Rats who released the album *Into the night we slide* in 1978. The single "ZX Dan" was the only song to receive radio play on SABC. Although the band has never officially broken-up they seldom perform and only release occasional albums. Handley was also the editor of South Africa's most enduring and successful fanzine, *Palladium*, published in the first half of the 1980s.

Haslop, Richard A fringe musician on the folk circuit in the 1970s and lawyer by profession. Established himself as a very knowledgeable and respected music journalist in the 1980s, especially with his record reviews for *Scope* magazine in the mid-1980s. Later became a radio presenter, playing fringe music on South African radio that no one else ever plays. He still performs at occasional music festivals.

Herbst, Ingi Drummer for South Africa's top white women-only band Clout who arrived on the South African stage with the single "Substitute" in 1977. The single was very successful in various European countries and in New Zealand. Tours to Europe followed and changing membership ended the women's-only status of the band. The band broke up in 1981. After a brief period with a band called Tarzan, Herbst left South Africa for a life in Germany where she continued as a drummer on the fringes of the German music set-up. She returned to South Africa in the late 1990s but is not presently involved in music performance.

Herholdt, Sonja Hugely popular singer amongst white Afrikaners in the 1970s and into the 1980s. She burst onto the pop circuit with the release of the single "Ek verlang na jou" (I long for you) in 1975. The song was interpreted by many as a song about lovers parted because of military service. It was regularly requested on military request programmes on SABC. In the 1980s she became a Christian and turned to gospel music. Her music career went into decline, but she made a relatively successful comeback in 2001.

Hertselman, Gary Song writer, lead vocalist and guitarist for The Kêrels. The Kêrels were regulars at Jamesons in the late 1980s and released the album *Ek sê* in 1988. Hertselman was also a member of the Gereformeerde Blues Band (see Kerkorrel below) in the late 1980s. He is still marginally involved in the music arena.

Ibrahim, Abdullah Formerly known as Dollar Brand (changed his name when he converted to Islam). South Africa's most internationally renowned jazz musician. Composer and pianist who has released numerous albums (see Rasmussen, 2000). He grew up in Cape Town and was involved in the 1950s jazz scene. Released the anthemic "Mannenburg" in 1974. Was strongly opposed to apartheid and spent two lengthy spells

in exile, on either side of a short period back in South Africa in the mid-1970s.

Kekana, Steve Very successful South African singer who started out with The Hunter in 1974 before becoming a solo artist in the late 1970s. He is very much a pop singer who is able to sing in a variety of African languages as well as in English. Already established in the black market, he successfully crossed-over into the white English market with the single "Raising my family" (1981), which reached number one in Finland and Number 3 in Sweden. His career went into decline after his involvement in the Bureau for Information's "Together we will build a brighter future" (1986) but he continues to record and release albums.

Kerkorrel, Johannes Former journalist who became a full-time musician in the late 1980s. Kerkorrel (Ralf Rabie) was at the forefront of the Voëlvry movement. He was a singer-songwriter and accomplished pianist. For the Voëlvry tour (see Chapter Eight) he formed the Gereformeerde Blues Band and performed overtly anti-government songs such as "Sit dit af" (1989). He continued to release albums and perform throughout the 1990s and into the new century until he committed suicide in 2002.

Khanyile, Jabu He became the lead vocalist for Bayete when he joined them in 1984. The band had formed in 1983 and released their debut album *Bayete* in 1984. Bayete were a politically overt band with a strong South African musical style and were extremely popular in the townships in the 1980s and continued to be successful in the 1990s even after Khanyile left the band for a successful solo career.

Kitchen, Syd One of South Africa's most enduring folk singers. A singer-songwriter who has been on the folk scene since he started out performing with his brother as the Kitchen Brothers in the late 1960s. By the late 1970s he had established himself as a solo singer, but also played with other folk singers including Steve Newman and Tony Cox. In 1986 he released *Waiting for the heave* (by Syd Kitchen and the Utensils), which included politically overt songs about the South African situation. He continues to record and perform.

Kombuis, Koos Real name is Andre De Toit. Changed his name to Andre Le Toit and became an established Afrikaans author in the 1970s and 80s. In the 2nd half of the 1980s he turned to music to get closer to his fan base. He released the album *Ver van die ou Kalahari* with Shifty Records in 1988. Changed his name to Koos Kombuis and released the acclaimed *Niemandslan*d (1989). He was very involved in the Voëlvry tour and has always been a central figure in the alternative Afrikaans music scene. He has released a number of albums since then and continues to write both fiction and songs and performs regularly. He has also recently written an autobiography.

Kramer, David Highly successful singer-songwriter in the satirical tradition. He began on the folk circuit in the 1970s and released *Bakgat* in 1981. The album secured a cult following, but the release of *The Story of Blokkies Joubert* broadened his audience considerably. He became a household name. Some of his music received a lot of airplay on SABC while most of it was not played at all because it was deemed too controversial.

His music became more politically explicit in 1986 with the release of *Baboondogs*. In 1986 he co-wrote the enormously successful musical *District Six* and has since written a series of musicals (some of which have made it to Broadway and the West End) and seldom records solo albums.

Kunene, Madala Durban-based musician who began with marabi band Amanikabheni in the early 1960s. Steadily built up his reputation as a maskanda guitarist and singer-songwriter. Played with various groups and as a solo act in the Durban region and also in Johannesburg during the 1970s and 1980s. Towards the end of the 1990s he signed to Melt 2000 and has performed in Europe and released three solo albums.

Laxton, Julian Legendary South African guitarist and songwriter who played with some of South Africa's most successful bands of the 1970s. These included Freedom's Children, Hawk (in both of these instances he was not one of the original members) and the Julian Laxton Band. In the 1980s he focused more strongly on film music, writing the very successful theme music for the *Shaka Zulu* television series, the theme song of which ("We are growing" [1986] performed by Margaret Singana) charted in European countries despite the cultural boycott.

Louw, Mara Louw began as a vocalist with the Wilbur Music Group in the early 1970s. She appeared in various musicals, culminating in an overseas tour from (1973-76) with the musical *Meropa* (also known as *KwaZulu*). On her return in 1976 she embarked on a solo career, making a name for herself through live performance and as a backing singer on albums by established musicians such as Hugh Masekela and Sipho Gumede. She does not write her own material but did release the single "Take me to the river" in 1982 and the album *Mara Louw* in 1984. She was very involved in the setting up of SAMA and was the first President of the Association. She is still involved in the music arena.

Louw, Steve Rose to prominence as the vocalist and guitarist for American-styled rock band All Night Radio who formed in 1981. The band released *The heart's the best part* (1984) and *The Killing Floor* (1986) but never became truly established on the South African circuit. The band broke up after the second album. In 1989 Louw formed Big Sky who released *Waiting for the Dawn* in 1990. Most of the songs on the album were intended for a third All Night Radio album which never materialized. Louw essentially is Big Sky, with invited musicians performing on album and onstage when he periodically promotes a new album.

Lucey, Roger Singer-songwriter who rose to prominence on the South African folk circuit in the late 1970s. Performed solo and with various backing bands. He was an outspoken critic of the government's apartheid policies and wrote and performed many songs which provoked police response. The Directorate of Publications banned the first of his two albums (both released by independent 3rd Ear Music) and he suffered ongoing police harassment. In the mid-1980s he briefly attempted to elude police attention by forming a protest country band called Tighthead Fourie and the Loose Forwards. However, he soon gave up a career in music and only attempted a return in the late 1990s.

Mabuse, Siph Drummer, vocalist, songwriter. He began his musical career when he joined the The Beaters as drummer in 1968. In 1976 the band became Harari, a successful disco-fusion band. Had a big hit with "Party" in 1980. In 1981 Mabuse left Harari in order to pursue a very successful solo career. He had a huge hit with the single "Burn out" (1984) which has become a South African classic. He later became the owner and manager of Kippies jazz venue in central Johannesburg, but continues to perform and releases occasional albums.

Mac, Heather Real name Heather McDermott. Lead vocalist for the new-romantic band Ella Mental. They released the relatively successful *Uncomplicated dreams* in 1984 and received widespread radio play with songs like "Pressure" (1984), "See yourself (clowns)" (1984) and "30 million people" (1985). In 1987 the band left the country and tried to launch a new career based in Ireland. However, their follow-up album did not do very well. Mac returned to South Africa in the early 1990s. She periodically performs on the fringes of the Cape Town music scene.

MacKenzie, Mac Began his music career playing in session bands in the Western Cape in the 1970s and 1980s. He became increasingly interested in goema music and formed the energetic band The Genuines in the mid-1980s. Mackenzie decided to move up to Johannesburg to further the band's career. Initially used a drum machine but then met up with accomplished drummer Ian Herman who joined the group. They signed up with Shifty Records and released the albums *Goema* (1986) and *Mr Mac and the Genuines* (1987). The latter featured Mac Mackenzie's father. They performed at the Culture in Another South Africa conference in Amsterdam in 1987 and tried to relocate there, but eventually became despondent and the band broke up. MacKenzie continues to perform (and record) on the fringes of the Cape Town music scene.

Makeba, Miriam Probably South Africa's most famous exiled musician. She became a successful singer in the Johannesburg area in the 1950s. She went overseas with the King Kong musical and was not allowed back in the country. With the help of Harry Belafonte she launched a successful career in the United States and has released numerous albums. She was very involved in African and anti-apartheid politics. Relocated to Guinea in the 1970s. She returned to South Africa in the early 1990s and continues to release albums and perform.

Marcus, Fuzzy Bass guitarist for Baxtop (see Larry Amos above). After the break-up of Baxtop he dropped out of music for a while before joining Robbie Robb's Tribe After Tribe, who achieved some acclaim on the live circuit and through radio play. When Tribe After Tribe broke up Fuzzy became disillusioned with the local music scene, went over to Germany before returning to South Africa to become a sound engineer in the film business. He still performs at occasional gigs, particularly with Larry Amos.

Marks, David A successful singer-songwriter on the folk scene in the 1960s. Wrote the all time top selling South African single "Master Jack" (1967) performed by Four Jacks and a Jill. He was uncomfortable singing and decided to use the money from "Master Jack" to set up 3rd Ear Music. He recorded vast amount of music, especially live

performances and was also involved in organizing live music at festivals and clubs. He is still involved in the music arena, promoting musicians and preserving his large archival collection.

Masekela, Hugh World-famous trumpeter who went into exile in the United States in the 1960s. He was briefly married to Miriam Makeba. He established himself with the single "Grazing in the grass" (1968), which reached number one on the United States charts. He became an outspoken critic of apartheid and regularly released albums throughout his career, including overtly political songs. In the 1980s he relocated to Botswana and then Lesotho. He returned to South Africa in the beginning of the 1990s and continues to record music and perform live.

Masondo, David Lead vocalist and founder member of the Soul Brothers who formed in Soweto in 1976. They became South Africa's top mbaqanga group, influencing many musicians in the years to come. The albums regularly sell in excess of 300 000 copies, excellent for a South African band. The group continues to record and maintains a huge fan base. Masondo writes, arranges and produces all Soul Brothers material with the only other surviving original member, Moses Ngwenya (see below).

Maswanganya, Mike Started working in the music industry in 1990. He began as a display artist with Gallo and was then promoted to a sales representative position. In 1995 he was promoted to an A&R position, doing well with various artists. In 1998 he joined EMI as head of the black division, CCP.

Mbuli, Mzwakhe Mbuli became famous as the highly critical 'People's Poet' who performed his own poetry at political rallies during the 1980s. Shifty Records approached him and he released the very overtly anti-apartheid album *Change is Pain* (1986), performing his poetry to a musical backing. He was always the victim of serious police harassment, and spent six months in detention before releasing his second album, *Unbroken spirit*, in 1989. He continued to release albums and perform into the 1990s but was arrested and found guilty of bank robbery in the late 1990s. He is still in jail.

McCully, Tully (Real name Tully McCullough). Original member of the very popular (amongst white South Africans) 1970s band, McCully Workshop. After the band broke up in 1979 McCully continued with recording in his Spaced Out Sound Studios in Cape Town.

McLennan, Rob Lead vocalist and songwriter with gothic rock-influenced No Friends of Harry formed in Johannesburg in 1986. They released the mini-album *One came running* in 1987 which included popular radio songs "Competition rules" and "A long way home". Continued to release albums into the 1990s, but the band broke up in the late 1990s.

Möller, Willem Recognized as a good guitarist, Möller has not had a stable musical career with one particular band. He has been a member of the Gereformeerde Blues Band (see Kerkorrel above), Steve Louw's Big Sky (see Louw above) and James Phillips'

Lurchers (see Phillips below). He was one of the central support musicians in the alternative Afrikaans scene of the late 1980s, playing guitar on Kombuis' *Niemandslaan* (see Kombuis above). He runs his own studio in Johannesburg and still plays with other musicians on their albums and live.

Mudie, Benjy Started out as a musician with Void (to become eVoid) in the late 1960s to mid-1970s. In 1976 opted for an active role in the industry itself. He joined WEA as an A&R person. Became one of South Africa's most successful A&R personnel dealing with predominantly white bands. The first band he signed at WEA was Baxtop. After leaving WEA in the early 1980s he formed his own company called TUSK. Continued to successfully sign local acts, at times with a fairly strong political content. He sold TUSK to Gallo and now operates independent label Fresh Music, including the Retrofresh project involving re-releases (on CD) of many South African albums from the 1970s and 1980s or compilations thereof.

Ngwenya, Moses Keyboard player and one of the original members of the Soul Brothers. Moses writes, arranges and produces all Soul Brothers material with the only other surviving original member, David Masondo (see above). The other three original members were killed in two car accidents in the 1979 and 1984.

Niederlander, Edi Prominent singer-songwriter folk singer of the 1970s who was a regular performer at South African folk festivals. Most noted as a guitarist, both acoustic and electric. She was always independently minded and refused to tow the industry line. A strong supporter of feminism and always anti-apartheid in her stance. She recorded two albums through independent Mountain Records in the 1980s: *Ancient dust* (1985) and *Hear no evil* (1989). Political songs were banned on SABC, but she nevertheless received airplay with two of her less political songs. She still performs and teaches guitar.

Neswiswi, Golden Radio Freedom announcer and producer during the early to mid-1980s. He went on to become Head of Radio Freedom in 1987.

Oldfield, Wendy Rose to prominence as the dynamic lead singer of popular pop-rock band Sweatband in the mid-1980s. The group wrote radio-friendly songs and received widespread airplay with the single "This boy" (1985). Oldfield left Sweatband in 1987 to pursue a relatively successful solo career (by South African standards).

Parr, Tim Began his career as a young and very impressive guitarist for Baxtop in the late 1970s (see entry on Larry Amos above). After the break-up of Baxtop, Parr formed the Tim Parr Band which metamorphosed into top new wave pop band Ella Mental which formed in 1983. Ella Mental had a relatively short but successful career (see Heather Mac above). The group relocated to Ireland in 1987 and recorded an album which sold relatively well overseas, but was not released in South Africa. Parr returned to South Africa in the 1990s and as continued to perform in various bands and as a solo artist. He also writes film music.

Phillips, James Recognized as one of South Africa's true rock musicians, he strongly believed in the need for local musicians to say something about the South African situation and to get out there and perform. He was one of the founder members of Corporal Punishment in Springs in 1978. The band released an EP and recorded a few other songs before breaking up. Thereafter Phillips formed the short-lived Illegal Gathering with ex-Corporal Punishment member Carl Raubenheimer. They recorded the album *Voice of Nooit* in 1981 but it was only released in 1986. Phillips met Lee Edwards at Rhodes University in the early 1980s and the two of them formed the Cherry Faced Lurchers. Phillips also masqueraded as satirical character Bernoldus Niemand and brought out the album *Wie is Bernoldus Niemand?* in 1984. Niemand was resurrected for the Voëlvry tour in the late 1980s. Apart from Phillips' sardonic and satirical songs he wrote and performed more serious political songs with the Cherry faced Lurchers, for example "Shot down" (1985). There was often a long gap between the recording and release of music, which confuses the chronology of Phillips' career. He recorded into the 1990s but died in 1995, as the result of injuries sustained in a car accident.

Phiri, Ray Began playing guitar in the early 1960s, played with various bands before joining The Cannibals in 1970. The Cannibals backed Jacob Radebe who was signed by Gallo. His albums sold in the region of 100 000 copies each. When Radebe died in 1979 the Cannibals became a group in their own right and with a change in membership became Stimela in 1981. They released the album *Fire Passion Ecstasy* in 1984. Stimela impressed Paul Simon when he came to South Africa to work on the *Graceland* (1986) album. Phiri gained overseas exposure through playing on Simon's albums and touring with him. Stimela went on to record a number of important protest songs on various albums including *Look, listen and decide* (1986), *The unfinished story* (1987) and *Trouble in the land of plenty* (1989). The band toured overseas but in 1992 Phiri left the group to pursue a solo career. He is also actively involved in cultural projects in his hometown of Nelspruit.

Plaatjies, Dizu Percussionist and founder member of Amampondo formed in the Western Cape in 1980. Lively band playing predominantly percussion instruments, particularly drums and marimbas. They have released a series of albums including *Searching for the missing link* (1986) and *Feel the pulse of Africa* (1989) and have performed overseas, most notably at the Nelson Mandela Birthday Concert at Wembley Stadium in London in 1988. The group is still performing and releasing albums. Plaatjies teaches at the University of Cape Town School of Music.

Pracher, Cecile SABC record librarian during the 1980s and member of the committee that convened regular record meetings to decide whether or not to play music submitted to the SABC. After the fall of apartheid she continued to work in the SABC record library, claiming that she had previously been duped by apartheid propaganda, but since realized she had been mistaken. She died of cancer in 2002.

Prior, Chris Well respected music disc jockey who began working with the SABC in the 1970s. He was one of the original Capital Radio deejays when the station was

launched in 1979. He later went to SABC's Radio 5 where he was known as the 'rock professor' but his specialist interest in music extends to jazz and folk.

Quinn, Roddy Started out with Springbok Radio at SABC before going into the record industry. Joined EMI in the 1980s and worked his way into an A&R position. He successfully signed and worked with many prominent white South African musicians. These included Johnny Clegg, Ella Mental and Via Afrika. He also ventured into management and promotions. He now focuses specifically on promotional work and concert organization.

Rathbone, Gary Guitarist and songwriter. Developed as a musician in the early 1980s and formed initial band called Empty Set, some of whose members formed What Colours in 1983, including Jimmy Florence (see above) who left the band to form the Dynamics. What Colours played on the Johannesburg circuit and elsewhere before breaking up. Rathbone formed Urban Camouflage and worked as a music journalist with 'Bits' and on Voice of Wits radio station. He was very involved with the ECC. In late 1984 members of Urban Camouflage formed Spectres (with Tara Robb on vocals) who had hits with "Teddy bear" (1988) and "Be-bop bop" (1989). Both songs featured on the album *Be-bop-bop* (1989). In between Rathbone was also a member of the Aeroplanes (see Carl Bekker above). In the 1990s Rathbone has made a living in the film industry.

Raubenheimer, Carl Founder member of Corporal Punishment with James Phillips. When Raubenheimer moved from Springs to Cape Town, the band broke up, but Phillips and Raubenheimer got together again to form the short-lived Illegal Gathering (see Phillips above). Raubenheimer released some solo material as Karl Helgard and performed in a succession of very short-lived bands in Cape Town. These included Teenage Botha and the Blacks and Oliver and the Tamborines. He has hundreds of hours of music recorded, but never released. He now works in the film industry.

Ridgeway, Clive Marginal Cape Town-based musician who was a member of the relatively successful Dr Jive and the Blue Notes in the early 1980s. Has since made a career in regional radio and presently has an influential marketing role at KFM in Cape Town.

Roberts, Harvey One of the original members of the Dynamics (see Florence above) and went overseas with them when they left for London. He returned to South Africa after the Dynamics broke up, and he took a job as sales rep for EMI and gradually worked his way up until he was appointed as General Manager of the EMI's black division, CCP. In the late 1990s he went independent with his own Bula Records.

Rosenberg, Alan (Stage name Alan Rose) Guitarist and songwriter, initially a member of Conglomerate who became one of South Africa's most successful white bands Rabbitt), but only after Rosenberg had left them. He met some white teenage girls at a Rabbitt concert in Durban and together they formed Peach, who went on to experience considerable South African success in the early 1980s. They received plenty of radio coverage but broke up when it became clear that overseas exposure was closed to them.

Rosenberg dropped out of music to pursue a career in retail.

Ross, Lloyd Formally became involved in music when he briefly joined the Radio Rats as bass guitarist in the late 1970s. He drifted into studio work and began Shifty Records with friend Ivan Kadey of National Wake. He went on to record numerous bands and musicians who were not being recorded by the majors. He still performed music, forming the Happy Ships (including Warrick Sony) and studio band Joe Azania and the Chameleons (with Ivan Kadey). He also wrote the theme tune for the television series 'Vyfster'. He sold Shifty in the 1990s, to pursue a career in film. He does still occasionally produce music projects.

Rutter, Karin Fringe Cape Town musician who played with Flux and Tarzan, Jane and the Bonsaiers. The bands never recorded but featured regularly at Cape Town's live venues, festivals and rallies. She also worked as a music and arts journalist. Has more recently been a member of Edi Niederlander's backing band.

Selby, Jonathan Lead vocalist and songwriter with glitzy new romantic band Petit Cheval. The band were played on the SABC and became popular amongst white teenagers in the mid-1980s. The band broke up after Selby's participation in the controversial Bureau for Information propaganda song "Together we'll build a brighter future" (1986). Selby attempted a solo career without much success and has since given up on a career in music.

Solomon, Neil Singer songwriter and guitarist who appeared on the music scene in the mid-1970s. Formed the group Neil Solomon and the Uptown Rhythm Dogs in 1978. *The occupant* was released in 1981 to much critical acclaim, including in Billboard Magazine. Overseas prospects blunted by the cultural boycott. Their biggest single was "Junk foods and disposable ladies" (1980) off the aforementioned album, but the band broke up at the end of 1982. Solomon then formed Bazar who didn't have much success. In 1985 he formed The Passengers who were relatively successful locally, but never enough to make a living from. The band released the album *Rule of the swallow* in 1989. He has written music for plays and film, and runs a studio in Johannesburg.

• **Sony, Warrick** (Real name Warrick Swinney) Founder member of the Kalahari Surfers, although the band was always essentially Sony and friends. This was certainly the case by the time he recorded the first album *Own affairs* (1984) with Shifty Records. Three other challenging and subversive albums were recorded during the 1980s, the first two of which were released by Recommended Records in London. Sony performed in Eastern Europe and Russia during the 1980s. He has been involved in other music projects in the 1990s including Free State Music, Trans Sky and more recently another Kalahari Surfers album. He took over Shifty from Lloyd Ross (see above), and does studio work in Cape Town.

Tshola, Tsepo Lead vocalist of Lesotho-based Uhuru who, in the late 1970s, were prohibited from touring South Africa because of their strong political message. Tsepo left the band and went into exile where he performed with Hugh Masakela and other South

Africa musicians in exile. Meanwhile Uhuru reformed as Sankomota and recorded an album with Shifty Records in 1984. Their music was a combination of jazz, mbaqanga and funk. In 1986 Tshola rejoined the group (who, under their new name, ignored the previous ban) and went on to record three albums with the band before he left to pursue a successful solo career.

Uys, Dirk A big supporter of the Alternative Afrikaans music scene of the late 1980s, Uys approached Shifty with an offer to assist in the organization of the Voëlvry tour of 1989. In the 1990s he began to organize predominantly alternative Afrikaans concerts in Stellenbosch and established the independent record label, Trippy Grape.

Van Blerk, Patrick Producer, songwriter and record label owner who has had a major impact on South African music, especially in the 1970s and early 1980s. In the mid-1970s he set up Jo'burg Records, an independent who operated like a small major. Top performers of the time such as Rabbitt, Margaret Singana, Julian Laxton, the Rag Dolls, the Radio Rats were all discovered and signed by Jo'burg Records.

Van Rooyen, Jacobus Chairman of the Publications Appeal Board throughout the 1980s. He was also Professor of Criminal Law at the University of Pretoria and published two books on censorship in South Africa, in 1978 and 1987.

Van Tonder, Jannie Trombone player who played with various bands in the 1980s including the Softies, the African Jazz Pioneers and Winston's Jive Mix-Up. In the late 1980s he participated in the Voëlvry tour as the drummer for the Gereformeerde Blues Band (see Kerkorrel above). Since then he spent some time in Amsterdam before returning to Cape Town where he runs a Big Jazz Band.

Veldsman, Rene Founder member of Via Afrika, a pop band with an ethnic vibe modeled around good times and fashion. The band was extremely popular and released *Via Afrika* (1983) and *A scent of scandal* (1984). The single "Hey boy" (1983) was very popular, especially on Capital Radio. In 1984 the band went over to the United States where they were very popular, mixed with the stars (including Lou Reed) and they were inexplicably invited to participate on the Sun City song (and featured on the video). When the cultural boycott meant that all doors were closed to them overseas, they returned to South African and disbanded. Veldsman then ran her own studio.

Discography

Album titles in *italics* and song titles in “inverted commas”. All available information has been provided. In some cases the full details could not be located.

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